■ Business / B1
Gas, diesel, kerosene prices up anew

■ Across / A17
Cory hacienda retrenching workers

■ Entertainment
Doly Atay-atayan: 90

■ News / A2
For 1st time, Carl, Clarence leave hospital separately

Bawasan ang pork barrel, o sulayan nang sanggalan?
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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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'Kabayan' is caretaker while GMA is in China

By Julito Labog-Javellana

MTTE President Hinirapod Arroyo going to China on a three-day visit, Vice President Noli de Castro will get a feel of what it's like to be the big boss.

It may not be much of a feeling.

The popular former television anchor was

Cop goes from hero to heel for sleeping on the job

By C. Esguerra and L. Salaverria

PO1 MARCIANO has increased functions to 'local' in less than 48 hours.

Gil Tad-hay bino takes an uneasy ride in Bulacan floodwaters. Central Luzon experienced its worst flooding since the 1970s.

River of life brings death, suffering to CL folk

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Like planting cycles, floods—ebbing, in the dishes...are regular seasons in the calendar of the barely flat pampanguita, who have lived for centuries in the basin-shaped Central Luzon.

Accustomed to the winds and waters of the Rio Grande (Pampanga River), Kapampangans had come to regard the river as a means of transport and their source of fish and water for their crops.

A source of life, the river has also become a source of suffering.

Of the more than 40 people who died in the rampaging floods that swept through much of Luzon the past week, at least 13 were from Central Luzon. The floods were caused partly by the

Floods jack up Metro food prices

By Christine Gaylican

EL TRANSPO. If you see milk tea trucks loaded with vegetables surging through the floods.

That seems oddest use now helping keep farm products from the north of the country to Metro Manila in order to bring down food prices, which have shot up in the wake of the massive flooding that has swamped Central Luzon.

The retail price of vegetable produce, such as carrots, has risen from an average of P50 to P120 per kilo in Metro Manila markets the past few days,

CBCP urges clergy to give cash to gov't

PRESIDENT Arroyo, a former economics professor, is in her element explaining her 10-point agenda to her top officials during the Cabinet workshop at the Palace on Tuesday.

Lim is 4th senator to give up entire pork

By Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana

OPPOSITION Sen. Alfredo Lim yesterday announced that he was giving up his entire pork barrel of P200 million for next year in an act of "sacrifice."

"If I would want to be of help to the nation, I would rather do it wholeheartedly and unconditionally and that would be by giving up the pork barrel allotted to my office altogether instead of investing it in stocks," Lim said.

His decision brought to four the number of senators who have given up their pork barrel, officially known as Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF). The others were Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senators

By Jeffrey M. Tupas and Anthony S. Alindo, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Marchit S. Rivera and Cynthia D. Balana, in Manila

THE PRESIDENT of the powerful Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has come to the cash-strapped government's rescue.

Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla has called on the faithful, especially members of the religious community, to embark on a collective sacrifice to help address the country's financial crisis.

Issuing a blunt in Cagayan City on Monday afternoon, Capalla's evangelical plea was: "It is possible for bishops, priests, nuns, brothers, and all the faithful to give up their monthly allowance maybe for one month or two and give it to the President?"

Only 1% each from the 75 million Catholics in the country would ease the problem, he said in his homily and more than this could spell the "much needed relief" that Filipinos needed.

As CBCP president, Capalla said, he hopes to influence the entire Philippine Catholic community in donating to "an act comparable of sharing." He assured that other religious groups could translate it in an act of the faith.

"I cannot direct the call to those who do not share my belief," he said. "[But] if all of you will join me, we will be able to make an impact. Throughout the country, we can influence people who are rich but greedy and insensitive to

Senate set to cut P106.7B from 2005 budget

By Michael Lim Ubac and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE is poised to cut P106.7 billion, which includes the liabilities of National Food Authority (Napocor), from the proposed General Appropriations Act for 2005, according to Sen. Ralph Recto.

Recto, chair of the Senate ways and means committee, said that the real budget was more than the P967 billion submitted by Malacañang to Congress, which, he said, only accounted for programmed expenditures.

"What was not submitted was the budget for unprogrammed expenditures in the amount of P53 billion, another P10 billion for the cash difference (amounts payable for 2004), plus P46.7 billion for the interest expense of Napocor-assumed liabilities," he said.

Relationship was to offset advising Congress to approve a P1.01-trillion budget, he said.

Recto and a number of senators, who attended the hearing on the fiscal plan of the government on Monday, found this figure staggering considering the fiscal crisis.

Recto and Sen. Richard Gordon wanted to trim the additional P106.7 billion to expenditures should the administration's economic managers fail to justify the amount.

Recto said approving the additional expenditures would amount to authorizing the executive to borrow more money to cover the unprogrammed (like expenses, cash payables and Napocor's interest expense).

At the hearing, Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong and Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin agreed with the observation. Unprogrammed items are only to be treated if there is a budget, and

Bush says war on terror can't be won

WITH the powerful symbolic of American democracy behind him, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani addresses delegates to the Republican National Convention as Madison Square Garden in New York on Monday. AP

RM Awards handed out sans GMA

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE PRESIDENT Ramon Magsaysay Awards were handed out last night in formal ceremonies, albeit with the notable absence of the guest of honor, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

It was learned during the ceremonies that the President was in Malacañang presiding over a Cabinet workshop and that she was to inaugurate a bridge in Mandaluyong City afterward.

The awards, considered Asia's equivalent of the Nobel Prize, were handed out in six of the year's seven ceremonies who were present and to the representatives of those nominees whose awards could not make it to the event.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2004

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Side-by-side, Carl, Clarence leave hospital

By Rita Nikolaga
Local Worker

NEW YORK—For the first time, formerly conjoined Filipino twins Carl and Clarence Agnaire left the hospital as two separate boys, in the seats of a double stroller pushed by their mother to the cheers of hospital staff.

"Look at my boys, all big side by side. This is what I have dreamed of for so long," said their mother Arlene Tan-Agnaire. "Just look at them. They are gorgeous."

The 2-year-old boys, who were born joined at the top of their heads, were successfully separated in a series of four delicate operations over a 10-month period at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore (CHAM) in this city.

The final operation resulting in their separation took place on Aug. 3, and yesterday the lively brightest and feisty brothers left the CHAM for continuing physical and speech therapy at a facility in Valhalla in upstate New York.

Carl and Clarence traveled in separate ambulances with a police escort to the children's hospital. They had been staying at Ronald McDonald House with their mother.

"This is a great day for Carl and Clarence, and a wonderful day for the staff at CHAM," said Dr. Peter Semczuk, vice president of clinical services at the hospital.

"Carl and Clarence's successful separation demonstrates the clinical capabilities of our world-class children's hospital. We are proud to have had the opportunity to make such an important difference in the lives of these two fine boys," he added.

Carl and Clarence were sent off by CHAM staff, including the doctors of doctors, technicians and the team of dedicated nurses who had cared for them throughout the past year. A colorful 15-ft banner with happy wishes for the boys was decorated by pediatric patients and displayed from the third floor window on the hospital.

They were wheeled out of the hospital by Arlene and grandmother Evelyn Aguirre and their twin head surgeons, Drs. James Goodrich and David Staffenberg, as well as the boys' pediatrician, Dr. Robert Marcus.

They rode side-by-side in a new double stroller, a gift from the BMC Pediatric Department, chanting teddy bears and other gifts from the staff.

Still heavily bandaged to protect their healing incisions, Carl and Clarence were separated from their conjoined twin status at CHAM Tribeca, Dangerous and troublers. The boys seemed to take all the attention and laughs in typical two-year-old style.

There were side-by-side portraits of the boys taken at the entrance. On their way down, Carl and Clarence engaged in a little brotherly horseplay, kicking and pushing each other and trying to push off the other's stroller.

Old, new faces in GMA Cabinet take their oaths

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has swapped Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez and several other Cabinet officials who were not included in the first phase of the Cabinet revamp.

Soriquez was one of 20 Cabinet officials who took their oath before the President last night.

Former Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and other Cabinet officials had earlier said that Soriquez, who has a pending case in the Sandiganbayan in connection with the allegedly hasty conversion of the PAR Shipyard in Pasapunga, was going to be replaced in the next wave of Cabinet changes that the President was supposed to announce last week.

Malacañang did not issue a statement about the reappointment of Soriquez and the other officials but released a list of those who were sworn into office last night at the end of a day-long Cabinet workshop on the President's 10-point program of government.

Aside from Soriquez, those who were reappointed and were sworn into office last night were Secretaries Pantaleon Alvarez (Labor), Estrella Alabastro (science and technology), Leandro Mendoza (transportation), Cesar Sarino (social welfare), Teresita Inday Quintos (presidential adviser on the peace process), and Reynaldo Parayno (Metro Manila Development Authority chair).

The economic managers taken the President had earlier decided to retain also took their oaths yesterday—Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima and Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong was reportedly out of the country.

Vice President Noli de Castro was sworn in as chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers and vice chair of the National Anti-Poverty Commission.

The new Cabinet appointees who took their oaths were Investment Nene Pilapil (agriculture adviser), Florencio Abad (education), Richard Gordon (environment), Raul Gonzalez (justice), Joseph Ace Durano (tourism), Ignacio Bunye (press), Raphael Ogilvie (Presidential Management Staff), Silvestrina Quiñones (chief presidential legal counsel), Gabriel Claudio (political adviser), Edgardo Pantaleon (presidential adviser for constituency affairs), Conrado Estrella III (Cabinet officer for privatized rentals), Diego Ibañez (government asset media group head), Salvado (Cabinet secretariat), Norberto Bagtasan (Philippine International Trading Corp. president) and Augusto Syjuco (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority head).

Aníbal Ladrag Aya-Ilano

Reconsider Iraq ban, US asks RP

THE UNITED States on Tuesday asked the Philippines to reconsider an order banning Filipinos from working in Iraq that was put in place after a Filipino truck driver was held hostage by Islamic militants.

The hostage, Angelo de la Cruz, was later released after intense negotiations but the order pushed the Philippines to withdraw its humanitarian contingent from Iraq.

US Ambassador to Manila Francis Ricciardone, stressed Tuesday that Washington was "not making any demands" about the Philippines' foreign policy.

But he said there were some 4,000 Filipino workers in Iraq who were contributing to rebuilding the country and his government hoped that "others will be allowed to join them."

He said contractors hired by the US to transport food and supplies were lucky from neighboring Kuwait wanted to hire Filipinos but were unable to do so.

"A suggestion is then, if the government could take a second look at relaxing that ban in very specific circumstances," Ricciardone told ABS-CBN television.

"If government is satisfied that all reasonable (means) possible is being done to protect drivers or the workers... then that might be something that could be considered," he said.

Filipino workers should be allowed to make their own decisions, Ricciardone said.

"There are no guarantees (of safety), of course, in going to Iraq," he added. AFP

DOT eyes 20M Sino tourists

By Jocelyn Uring

CHINA, here we come.

Newly-appointed Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano is mandated by the Power of Philippine tourism lies in attracting the 20 million Chinese who travel abroad.

Last year, only a miniscule 0.1 percent of these Chinese tourists came to the Philippines, he said yesterday during simple turnover rites at the Department of Tourism.

Outgoing Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan was optimistic that under his successor, the DOT would achieve its target of 2.5 million tourist arrivals this year, surpassing last year's 1.9 million arrivals as well as the record-setting 2.02 million arrivals in 1997.

Pagdanganan, who was DOT chief for 1995-2004, reported that as of end of August, 1.3 million foreign tourists had arrived in the Philippines, with more expected as the Christmas season approaches.

Last month, the DOT opened a tourism office in the Chinese capital of Beijing as a result undertaken a more coordinated and focused promotion of the Philippines and double the number of Chinese tourist arrivals by year-end.

Stressing the role of tourism in poverty alleviation and job creation, Durano said the role of the DOT was to create and facilitate partnerships with other government agencies and the private sector.

He added that the tourism industry required support services from the transportation department, the public works department, the infrastructure, and the health department for public sanitation.

Meanwhile, Durano issued a directive to the transfer of operations of the DOT from Manila to Cebu City as the national government is plagued by a fiscal crisis.

"The gain of this policy would be determined by two factors: personnel welfare and budgetary requirements," he told reporters in an interview.

The transfer was President Macapagal-Arroyo's plan to decentralize and decongest Manila, Pagdanganan told the Business Mirror. Durano that the move would push through this month.

The DOT would be spending P100 million for the construction of its building in Cebu and another P100 million for the transfer of its employees. This would affect 1,800 employees, although only half are expected to move to Cebu. A housing allowance of P5,000 would be given to the evacuees (1,200) amounting to about P6.5 million a month.

Aside from DOT's central office, its attached agencies, the Philippine Tourism Authority and the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp. would also be moving to Cebu. The department would be using the ground floor of the Mabuhay-ng Sugbu, the new, white Cebu Convention Building, as temporary office.

GMA names Abes GSIS chair

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed Bernardino Abes as new chair of the Government Service Insurance System's board of trustees.

Abes replaces Bartolome Concepcion who retired in June.

A Palace statement said that the President was acting on "quickly fill the vacuum in the top leadership of the state insurance firm."

The Malacañang statement said Abes was a lawyer with "extensive experience in labor relations and administration, banking, the academe, lawyers and professional management."

Abes previously served as presidential adviser on legislative affairs, head of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office and Social Security Commissioner in 2001. He also headed the President's search committee, which recommended appointees to various government posts.

Abes' appointment as GSIS chair is a homecoming of sorts as he held the position from 1965 to 1965 during the administration of Ms Arroyo's father, President Diosdado Macapagal. He also served as labor secretary from 1962 to 1964.

He has also held various positions in the private sector, having served as director of Union Bank, PNB Philippine Holdings, Philex Mining Corp. and Petron Corp., before taking Joseblanco

Artist should be consulted, says expert

By Fel B. Zafaralla

QUEZON country and respect, art historians and conservationists are required to consult with the original artist...if he is still alive—before they could even think of touching an old work.

This is accepted practice among artists and curators but a local art world, conservation expert architect Rey Ty says, could be known yesterday.

"If the artist has passed on, the process requires must be consulted," he said.

Ramirez, chief of the Historical Preservation Division of the National Historical Institute (NHI), said it was important "to preserve the authenticity of a work of art.

What's best is when the artist and restorer collaborate."

Another accepted practice among restorers is to remove what's left of the art piece which had been exposed to damage either by natural or man-made causes.

"But it is only the artist who can put another impression," he stressed.

The Supreme Court's decision allow remedial Romantic "Hotel" Mercado, it had complained that the restoration of his work, a depiction of the Rev. Gabriela Silang, was materials as without the permission or guidance.

Miranda said the mural, executed in oil panel and monochromatic shades, lost its total value and depth as a result of the retouching, and about 60 percent of the original piece was "completely altered."

The mural has the right, he said, was the loss of vital details on the "visual comprehension" of the 1986 People Power revolution.

Among the details lost was the portion showing the front page of the Feb. 26, 1986 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, which headlined the departure of dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Miranda had earlier asked to meet with the restoration team "to decide and know and find a solution to the problem." But he repeat, until more than two weeks ago, seemed to have fallen on deaf ears.

Last week, Fr. Gabriel Coral, director of the Archdiocesan Archives of Manila, whose team did the restoration, defended the work.

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MILF seen provoking military

By Nicole Paya

THE MILITARY said it would file a complaint against the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front for truce violations after a large group of MILF fighters gathered near a military detachment in Aleosan, Cotabato, on Monday ahead of the proposed resumption of peace talks, a military official said yesterday.

Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano, who heads the government side in the joint panel monitoring the 18-month-old ceasefire, said about 300 MILF guerrillas had moved into the village of Camanga near the town of Aleosan on Monday.

He said the show of force could have sparked a fire fight with government troops had the MILF representatives in the area-bearing committee on the cessation of hostilities (CCCH) not intervened and ordered the rebels out of the area.

The military declined to say what triggered the sudden rebel movement, but it followed an armed clash last week near the town of Mamasapano.

The CCCH monitoring team was meeting to try to defuse the situation ahead of planned peace talks in Malaysia, Yano told reporters.

Talks are resuming "to avert any further hostilities because we also have troops deployed very near the area," Yano said.

"It's too close but be confident. There would be a shoot-out," he said.

Yano said he immediately contacted his MILF counterparts in the CCCH, Bruke Bilal-Imbong, after receiving reports from Camanga residents about the MILF movement. He said Malimbang immediately protested, as to the area with other CCCH representatives and the rebels pulled out.

"We still don't know the reason for the massing up in the area but they willingly removed the area, relocated and went back to their respective positions," Yano said.

Military spokesperson Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero said the rebels, headed by a certain Zainudin Sindatok, also known as Commander Yano, completed their pull-out at around 3:30 p.m. yesterday. The rebels withdrew to the Magandadawas towns of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Mamasapano, Magpasuc and Datu Unsay, Maguindanao.

Soldiers who were deployed near the rebels' position were also pulled out by their commanders, Lucero said.

Yano said the military would file the complaint before the CCCH, the joint committee relieve complaints against violations of the ceasefire, which had been broken repeatedly in the past, most brought and disturbed out.

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the military's reaction was "exaggerated," claiming that the rebels were not in Camanga on "troops tour" with the military.

He explained that an MILF commander residing in the village came into conflict with some residents and that the MILF rebels were sent to Camanga to maintain peace.

Reds have killed 91 civilians so far

By Nicole Paya

A TOTAL of 91 civilians were killed this year by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, the military announced yesterday.

Four statements released to media, issued from of the Philippines Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero said the civilians were killed as a result of "terrorism activities" staged by communist rebels from January 1 to August 25.

Most of the civilian casualties were reported in the Bicol Region or Region V, followed by Central Luzon, the Southern Tagalog region, and Regions XIII, XVI and XIII.

Lucero said a total of 142 atrocities were committed by the rebels during the period against civilians. They included 86 liquidations, 35 kidnappings, 14 robberies and holdups and one bombing incident. There were 26 attacks against privately owned companies, with damage amounting to P66.2 million. The Pinatubo Negros region was a favorite target and suffered P42 million in damage.

"Statistics showed that the CPP/NPA/NDF have been aggressive in using terrorism as a tool to hit its political missteps," Lucero said.

He added that the AFP was calling on the CPP/NPA leadership "to refrain from targeting noncombatants and civilians if it wants to retain its hard-won terrorist list."

CPP/NPA rebels said the attacks against noncombatant targets were in support of the guerrillas' efforts to cancel factory relocation from their communities, after the terror tag was off travelling from some perfectly good to abroad.

The rebels indefinitely postponed planned peace talks with the government in the next few weeks. They are trying to pressure Manila to prevail on Washington and its allies to remove the CPP/NPA from the black list. With AFP

Corrections

IN THE Aug. 4 issue, a front page story on the youngest Ateneo Law graduate, Ellen Carmona, quoted his uncle Jorge as saying that Augusto Catalan, Ellen's grandfather, graduated from UP with a 1.00 average. "The highest honor received," UP records show that Ramon S. Sevilla — the late father of Inquirer columnist Inda Sevilla Mendoza — also graduated summa cum laude from the university with a perfect 1.0 average in 1927.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 31 issue, a Metro story on Page A17— "Drug suspect escapes from jail guards" — misnamed the name of the accused drug dealer. He is Marcelo Reyes Maravilla...not Maravilla Reyes.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Cleo Ong, the editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Ortigas Extension, Makati City; fax this 897-0170; 896-6160; e-mail cleo@inquirer.com.ph and mcdaily@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Pangalangan, readers advocate, the same address and fax number or those of the city editor and e-mail address rpanglan@magister.com.ph.

Want to join the Jesuits?

THE JESUIT Priests and Brothers will be holding a vocation seminar for male college students and young professionals on Sept. 12. The seminar will be held at St. Paul College, Padre Gil St., Malate, Manila from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Maximum age limit is 29 years old. Registration is free. Those interested may call 426-6181 and ask for any member of the Vocation Promotions Team for more details. Or you may write to vocpromo@admu.edu.ph.

Aglipay skirts Napolcom directive

By Christian V. Esguerra

PALAWAN National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay said he wrong of police officers will go on schedule the week despite the National Police Commission's directive to suspend the new promotions he had issued.

Instead of establishing "area police officers" (APOs), Aglipay will create task forces, supposedly to avoid the legal complications identified by the Napolcom, the policy-making body of the PNP.

The task forces will function as the planned APOs, tasked to maintain internal security, mainly among regional police officers under their jurisdiction, Aglipay said.

The task forces will be patterned after the area commands of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"We want to enhance coordination among all regions, including that between the PNP and AFP in areas of terrorism and other important matters," Aglipay said.

The Napolcom junked the AFP-proposed [illegible] on Sept. 1.

Its chairman, Edwin Ermita, said the decision was made by the Napolcom en banc.

Ermita said the Napolcom decision was based on the fact that the proposal violated the Constitution and the Local Government Code.

Aglipay said supervisors is just an additional job for regional directors, a sacrifice on their part.

Aglipay said supervisors [illegible]

"They'll be using the same funds and the same staff. There will be no extra cost. We'll just improve the management of the PNP," he said.

In the proposed revamp, Chief Supt. Nilal Querol, Central Luzon director, will take charge of the Zamboanga region (Region IX) and supervise Superagen Pinpin XII and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Chief Supt. Oscar de la Torre is expected to replace Querol as head and area supervisor of Central and northern Luzon.

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Gas cheats will be punished –Malacañang

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Tina Santos

GASOLINE stations found to be shortchanging their customers, especially in the face of soaring oil prices, will not be tolerated, Malacañang said yesterday as it ordered the Department of Energy and local government officials to throw the book at dishonest petroleum retailers.

"Cheating in the midst of a crisis is to be doubly condemned and will be punished accordingly," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement. "Our transport sector and commuters have suffered enough from oil prices."

An inspection conducted by the Quezon City Treasurer's Office yesterday on gasoline stations in the city revealed that 44 of 119 gasoline stations were fleecing their customers through tampered pumps. The tests showed that the pumps were uncalibrated or short by several milliliters of the gas sold per transaction.

The local government code empowers city governments to inspect and correct uncalibrated gasoline pumps.

Bunye said Malacañang wanted the inspection of gasoline stations broadened to cover not only Metro Manila but all gasoline stations nationwide.

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte yesterday said that he would push for stiffer fines for those caught cheating their customers. He said he would propose to the City Council an increase in the fines from P400 to P1,000 for the first offense; from P800 to P2,000 for the second offense; and the revocation of the license or closure of the establishment for the third offense.

The mayor said he would also seek an increase in the calibration fee from P20 to P100.

The Department of Energy, that sent three of its men to join the survey, imposes a P10,000 fine on erring gas stations, according to city treasurer Victor Endriga, who led the inspection team.

Belmonte said the inspections would continue until all the gas stations in the city are properly calibrated.

Meanwhile, a Flying V station in Araneta Avenue corner Brixton Hills included in the list of delinquent gasoline stations, yesterday denied that it was duping its consumers.

In a statement faxed to the INQUIRER, Paul Tanjutco, Flying V chief operating officer, claimed that of the 12 dispensers in the station, nine units were found to be distributing well within the "tolerable" 10 milliliter less (for every 10 liter bucket of oil products) allowance.

Three are even dispensing over the measurements, Tanjutco said.

But Endriga explained that fines would still be imposed even if the gas pumps were dispensing within the tolerable allowance. The meter readings should be leveled at zero, he said.

Petron public affairs manager Virginia Ruivivar, on the other hand, said they were looking into allegations made that five of its service stations in Quezon City found in Barangays Malaya, Laging Handa, Kristong Hari, Diliman and Talipapa, were not dispensing the right amount of fuel.

"If we find that any of our dealers are remiss, then we will immediately reprimand them and may even revoke their dealerships," she said.

"While our own standards are more stringent than the DOE, it appears that the Quezon City government is using an even more stringent standard. We are more than willing to cooperate with them to clarify these standards since we believe that there should be a uniform benchmark to avoid any misunderstanding," Ruivivar added.

Petron said it already had several measures in place to ensure that none of its stations were violating DOE's Retail Standards for liquid petroleum products.

For instance, Petron dealers are required to check the calibration of their dispensing pumps daily. A third party also inspects the pumps on a regular basis.

The local government unit where a certain dealer is operating also guarantees that pumps are not tampered with by sealing the dispensing pumps after calibration. *With Abigail Ho*

AN INSPECTOR from the Quezon City treasurer's office lifts a calibration bucket during a visit to the Petron gas station along Roosevelt Avenue yesterday. JOAN BONDOC

Swedish fugitive arrested

By Leila B. Salaverria

A SWEDE who fled to the country three years ago to evade arrest for murder in Sweden has been arrested.

Charlie Mats Tomas Olsson, 32, was arrested in Olongapo City on Monday by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation's Interpol Division.

Olsson was arrested upon the request of Benny Carlson, Nordic Police Liason Office of the Swedish Embassy in Bangkok, NBI-Interpol chief Ricardo Diaz told media yesterday.

Carlson told the NBI that Olsson was wanted for an "execution-style" killing on Aug. 26, 2001.

Olsson also refused to make a statement when he was presented to media yesterday.

The District Judge of Huddinge in Sweden issued a warrant for Olsson's arrest on Feb. 13, 2002. His Swedish passport was revoked later.

Diaz said the suspect eluded arrest in Angeles City, where authorities earlier went to look for him.

When the suspect was arrested in Olongapo City, he had been living with a girlfriend and their year-old daughter in an apartment in Barangay Baretto.

tanong ng Bayan

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Tuwing Huwebes 8pm

Text ang inyong "fearless view" sa 2910. Piliin namin ang pinakamagaling na sagot. Ang premyo ay gigo-engga, isang 21" color TV set!

I-type: INQTV <ang inyong sagot>, <buong pangalan>, <siyudad o probinsiya>, tapos ipadala sa 2910. Cut-off time: WEDNESDAY, 6 PM. Winner will be identified during the InqTV program: Thursday, 8pm, on ABC.

text 2910

Bawasan ang pork barrel, o tuluyan nang tanggalin?

Globe Smart Piltel

Narito ang ilan sa mga sagot nina: Text na: "dapat po bawasan ng seventy percent ang pork barrel pra makatulong sa ating economic crises dhil po sa mas marami ang nagugutom"

Ida Cabentoy, Manila

"bawas o tanggal man ang p.barrel-may mahuwakang pondo po rin ang local govt units who are not shepherds of corruption sana ngal"

Peter Palacios, Negros Occidental

Another Filipino dies in Beirut plunge

By TJ Burgonio and Marvin P Mariñ

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday denounced the death and possible sexual assault of a Filipino domestic helper in Lebanon as he ordered the Philippine Embassy in that country to "get to the bottom" of the incident.

In a separate development, Ben Olandres fell to his death from the balcony of his employer's apartment building in Beirut on Aug. 24, more than seven months after she arrived to work as a domestic helper, Department of Foreign Affairs officials said.

A postmortem showed she had sustained head lacerations and other physical injuries "consistent with sexual assault," the officials said.

Her alleged illegal recruiter in the Philippines, identified only as Liezl, was arrested last Wednesday by agents of the Presidential Anti-Illegal Recruitment Task Force headed by Director Reynaldo Anzia after the victim's family lodged a complaint.

"I condemn in the strongest possible terms all those responsible for this tragedy," said Romulo at a press briefing. "Rest assure nothing less than the heaviest penalty mandated by law."

Romulo also directed the embassy in Beirut to exhaust all legal and diplomatic means "to get to the bottom of the mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of Ms Olandres."

The Lebanese agent's husband, Mohamad Khalil, and 13-year-old son had been taken into custody by the authorities in Beirut and subjected to laboratory tests for "possible complicity," the DFA officials said.

Olandres arrived in Beirut on Jan. 19. He was observed to have been "lonely and stressed," the officials said.

Headaches

On Aug. 23, her employer brought her to her brother-in-law's residence, the Lido Agency owned by May Khalil, after she had complained of headaches for several days.

Two days later, at around 2:30 a.m., two other overseas workers saw Olandres rise from her bed and walk toward the balcony on the sixth floor of the building where Khalil lived. Neighbors also observed Olandres when they saw her perched on the balcony ledge.

After a one-and-a-half hour standoff, Olandres fell from the balcony just as a fireman tried to grab her, the officials said.

She was the fourth Filipina to fall to her death in Lebanon this year. The others were Luzelda Ramos Landicho Montenegro who died on Feb. 25, Catherine Sumitra on May 3 and Lisa Pascua on May 16.

Government neglect

The death of Olandres is a clear manifestation of government neglect, a militant workers group said yesterday.

Wenee, Migrante said, Olandres' family will not get a sentence as she had been illegally recruited.

According to Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado, the case of Olandres is "prima evidence that the Philippine government has not taken steps to address the horrendous plight of OFWs in Lebanon."

Migrante recalled that the Philippine Embassy in Beirut had sent Montenegro's remains and Pascua back to their divorce employers after they had brought help.

"This shows the government does not care if its citizens get brutalized, raped and killed on the altar of labor export," Bragas-Regalado said.

Officials to stay

Meanwhile, the Palo yesterday said it would not pull its officials out of Lebanon despite the death of Olandres unless the DFA recommended it.

Undersecretary Jimmy Cruz said labor attaché Lilibeth Tolentino and welfare officer Marcelita Ortiz will remain as their posts unless the DFA submits a request to Palo.

Cruz said the DFA had earlier sent a fact-finding team to Lebanon to investigate the deaths of the three Filipinos who had fallen to their deaths in separate incidents.

Yesterday, Cruz admitted the Palo had not yet received the DFA report.

"We have to go through a process... We have not received the report of the DFA regarding negligence of embassy officials," he said, adding that their head "never would depend on the recommendation.

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Wanted: Older maids

SINGAPORE—Singapore will raise the minimum age and schooling requirements for foreign maids ahead of an expected influx of Filipino domestic workers due to lower levies, press reports said Monday.

"We have about 150,000 maids. Per capita discussion to the significantly because about 30 percent of households benefit from these [lowered] levies," local newspaper Today quoted Manpower Minister Ng Eng Hen as saying.

Addressing local media over the weekend, the minister, whose office handles work permits for foreign domestics, said many maids are young village girls with little schooling, and "they're not used to city living."

Singapore is tightening the rules to increase it expects more families to hire maids after government levies for hiring domestics were lowered as part of measures aimed at encouraging couples to have more babies.

Most Singaporean live in high-rise apartment buildings, thinly usually come from rural areas of Indonesia, the Philippines and South Asian countries. AFP

Complaint leads cops to firearms

By Tina G. Santos

A 61-YEAR-OLD man's allegation that intimate firing led members of the Central Police District to a "collection" of firearms and a grenade in his house in Quezon City early yesterday morning.

In Camp Peruquia Lipana, chief of the CPD-Criminal Investigation Unit (CPD-CIU), identified the suspect as Bernardo Aquino, of 3826-Pingkian II, Batasang Pambansa Town.

Lipana said neighbors of Aquino called Center Hotline 117 and complained of him firing a gun in their neighborhood.

Members of the CPD Station 2 and CPD-CIU formed a team and applied for a search warrant against Aquino.

Morning raid

Armed with the warrant for about and search issued by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, policemen then went to the suspect's home at about 6 a.m.

During a search, police found firearms and an explosive inside the house of Aquino.

Behind from his house were one .38-caliber revolver, a homemade shotgun, seven 12-gauge shotgun rounds, nine .38-caliber rounds and a fragmentation grenade.

Police records showed that Aquino was also previously arrested for illegal possession of a machine gun.

Aquino, who is now detained at the CPD headquarters in Camp Karingal, is expected to be charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives, aside from alarm and scandal complaints.

Teacher arrested for drugs

By Nelson Flores

A TEACH school teacher and six other suspects were arrested over the weekend for allegedly selling illegal drugs in Quezon City and Cavite.

Agents from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) seized 700 grams of methamphetamine hydrochloride, worth 3500,000, from the suspects.

Senior Supt. Bernardo Sumbar, PDEA public information officer, identified the suspects as Jonathan Rosario Mandolog, 32; Rosalie Mariposa, 31; Marilla Lee, 47; Lydia Dungo, 29; Leslie Quijano, 30; Lemuel-ing Cabanerao, 26; and Minda Argota, 37.

Separate arrests

He said Mandolog, Mariposa, Lee and Dungo were arrested near SM City Sanca in North EDSA, while the rest were apprehended in the parking lot of SM Bicutan.

Sumbar said the suspects were arrested after several months of surveillance.

He added that Mandolog, who reportedly denied the allegations against her, was a teacher at San Francisco High School.

The suspects, now detained at the PDEA headquarters in Quezon City, have been charged with selling illegal drugs, a crime punishable by death under Republic Act 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

Six civilians

Meanwhile, PDEA Undersecretary and Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr. said his agency was not employing civilians in its anti-drug operations.

Avenido made the clarification following reports that two civilian agents of the agency were arrested following separate minor traffic incidents in Central Luzon.

He said the PDEA, being the principal government organization involved in the anti-drugs war, could tap the services of the police, the National Bureau of Investigation, and the customs and the immigration bureau for its operations, therefore, there was no need for it to employ civilians.

Negligent jail escorts dismissed

By Luige A. del Puerta

FIVE BUREAUCRATS in a custodial unit each escorting suspects to the courts, four jail officers have been relieved of their duties.

JO1 Edwin Garcia, JO1 Ronald Balonto, JO2 Jose Pulpo and JO2 Irwin Calabia, who had accompanied suspected drug dealer Rizaldo Marcelo to the Muntinlupa Regional Trial Court yesterday to attend a hearing, were also charged with infidelity in the custody of prisoners.

The charge carries a penalty of two to six years imprisonment.

The four have been told to report to the warden's office, according to jail chief Supt. Abraham Abello.

"They are now detained at the regional headquarters in Quezon City for questioning," he said.

"As far as I am concerned, they are already considered relieved from their jobs. We are waiting for the formal order from the regional headquarters," Abello added.

On Monday morning, Marcelo managed to outwit his handcuffs, then quickly disappeared inside the City Hall complex, where the jail and the police headquarters are located.

Marcelo, 46, sometimes uses the name Rizaldo Marcelo and has five pending cases involving illegal drugs, records showed.

A companion, Sinsot, had tagged along with the suspect when he was brought to the court by his jail escorts. The two were even handcuffed together, according to reports.

Marcelo pulled another maneuver to loosen the grip on his handcuffs, paving those were too tight, according to Sinsot.

The couple have a daughter (not a son as earlier reported) who is also in jail for illegally violating the country's narcotics laws.

Distraction

Abello said an unending commotion by INSP. Claudino Corpuz, the policeman who shot and killed three San Andreas early last month, had distracted the jailers.

"Many inmates were also attending investiture [Their attention was focused on the unending investiture]," the jail warden said.

Marcelo took advantage of the situation and fled toward the old city jail building, now the treasury office.

It was the first time in the city's history that a suspect escaped while being escorted to the courts, a dismayed Abello said.

WAITING IN LINE Drivers squeeze through the operational areas of Sevilla Bridge on the Mandaluyong-Manila boundary as workers prepare for the opening of new lanes yesterday afternoon.

ALAN SANTOS

Camanava Summit off to uneasy start

By Edson C. Tayabas Jr.

SOME members Metro Manila mayors are having doubts about the feasibility of the proposed P6.8-billion Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela) Flood Control Project that its designers say could help alleviate the perennial flooding problem in the area.

In northern Metro Manila, flood-flows into the navotas and Tenejeros, rain or shine, the two most flo-tula cases. Flooding is aggravated when heavy rains coincide with the rising tide.

After the mayors and other local officials grilled engineers from the Department of Public Works and Highways working on the project at the start of the Camanava Summit in Valenzuela City yesterday morning, Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco said that some details of the project were either crapped or deferred because of insufficient funds.

Malabon City Mayor Canuto Oreta brought up the issue of delays in the project, which is expected to be completed in 2007.

The conservation began in June 2003, but the lanes on part from the DPWH channel that only about 7 percent of the project had been completed after a year.

This is more than 2 percent short of the original target for the first year of construction.

The mayors were also surprised to find out that the worldwide phenomenon of ground subsidence also affected the Camanava area.

Project consultant Luis Evan told the mayors that the lowering of the ground had been considered in the design of the polder dikes, but he could not present new data about the rates of subsidence in areas within Camanava.

Caloocan City Mayor Enrico Echiverri then asked why the project engineers were installing by the project design if they did not know the rate of subsidence in the area.

Earlier, two student geologists from the University of the Philippines National Institute of Geological Sciences re-

ported about about the project.

They said that the project design was based on old data of subsidence and could have ignored recent subsidence rates, which could already be higher.

Sandoval said he found that with the continuous ground subsidence, the whole project could be obsolete in just a decade.

But Project Manager Carlo Bautista said subsidence would be addressed through the maintenance of dikes, which could be added with another layer after some time.

The MMDA also presented a P200-million plan to rehabilitate the 24 pumping stations in Camanava, for of those stations are not operating at present.

Oreta also discussed traffic management strategies, housing, city planning, other infrastructure projects and the problem of garbage disposal.

Stolen van found in Marikina house

By Luige A. del Puerta

THE POLICE in Marikina City recovered a stolen van which had already been stripped of its accessories in Barangay Petang Monday night.

PO3 James Alexander said the successful operation brought the police chase to pinpointing a warehouse where car parts like engines, carpets and seats are wiped clean of identifying marks, and then resold.

Alexander said Rolando Garcia, the caretaker who was caught dismantling the Lite Ace van, had provided information about the warehouse, said to be located in Barangay Santa Elena.

Garcia admitted to police that he had "shopped up" the van. He said it was the first time he did such a thing—a claim police refused to believe.

Garcia has also named his accomplices, police said.

He identified them as Reynaldo Bulanday, Christopher dela Cruz and a certain "Michael." Bulanday is on top of the city police's list of most wanted car thieves.

As Sun Star is sent out of jail, pointing had every time he got arrested, the police said.

Michael was the one who brought the van to the house in Barangay Concepcion on Tatlong Kings Street where it was found, Alexander said, quoting the suspect.

The Lite Ace van belonged to Gloria Manuntag, also of Barangay Provisa. It was reported missing on Saturday.

Bacani book launch

EL KATIPUNAN the solution to the rebellion in Mindanao? Is the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao an effective vehicle to achieve peace and development in the region?

These issues are discussed in a book, "Beyond Paper Autonomy: The Challenge in Southern Philippines," that will be launched on Sept. 1 at 3 p.m. at the Manila Hotel. The author is Dean Benedicto R. Bacani of the College of Law of Notre Dame Seremony in Cotabato City.

Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide will be the guest speaker at the book launching.

Rowe Jay keeps on bleeding

ROWE Jay

FOR 12-YEAR-OLD Rowe Jay Bautista a small cut or wound is a serious thing.

Rowe Jay is afflicted with hemophilia, a rare hereditary disorder in which blood fails to clot naturally, thus it takes long for his wounds to stop bleeding.

His parents, Romeo and Teresita, only found out that he was sick with hemophilia when he was in the age of two.

Teresita said Rowe Jay fell on his face, which caused his lips to bleed profusely.

Then, Rowe Jay cannot walk because both his knees are swollen as an effect of his ailment and the lack of medication.

She has to experience at least a semblance of normal life. So needs to take a blood clotting agent called Factor VII, his mother said.

One vial of factor VII costs P25,000 and Rowe Jay needs six vials every 12 hours.

Approximately, they need P2 million to cater for his lifetime medication.

Teresita said they were having a hard time providing for their son's medical needs.

Her husband receives a meager income from being a construction worker.

"I am pleading to the readers to help my son," she mother said in a letter to the Inquirer.

Interested donors may deposit their contributions to the account of Teresita Bautista at BCBC Lupa Branch. Her account number is 1000-0650-1.

Donors may call her 09.16.347.6828 and 8927.2742222. Jocelyn D.

RM Awards handed out sans GMA

From page A1

friend toward the end when the daughter of Dr. Aung Sayayong of China, who was reportedly barred from leaving the country, came on stage but is too frail to accept her father's award.

Dr. Aung was the honoree for public service but has been outspoken in speaking out against his government's screw-up of the SARS epidemic in China in 2002.

"Now I exist in this moment it is not I but my father who is here on this stage. It is a pity that my father is unable to receive this award," said his daughter Aung Mai, who is based in the United States.

"This award is not only to honor him but it is also given to recognize his courage in speaking the truth and encourage him to continue to speak the truth. This award was only encouraged my father, but numerous Chinese people as well," she said, to warm applause.

Until last Friday, organizers had thought Aung would not be able to send a representative to receive his award.

The other awardees were Frances Identical Commission on Good Government chair Sayden Yusay, for government service; Thai Buddhist monk Sulak Sivaraksa, for community leadership; writer Abdullah Abu Sayeed from Bangladesh, for journalism, literature and creative communication; Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, for Philippine and Latin American Presidential understanding; and Filipino Benjamin Abadilano, for emergent leadership.

Bobonan, India's former navy chief turned peace advocate, lauded Arroyo's "courageous decision" to send Filipino troops to Iraq despite strong opposition from the majority of Filipinos.

Bobonan said: "The role of the military must also not remain static. It must learn to walk in keeping with the times. Your President Macapagal-Arroyo's own courageous decision to pull back your troops from Iraq has been acclaimed the world over. While this might have made her unpopular with a few, it has gained her many friends and admirers including myself."

Rosas received the longest applause when her name was called. She acknowledged this with a smile.

Her citation said she kept the public's confidence in government "through service of exceptional integrity and vigor and her unwavering pursuit of the rule of law."

"I feel humbled by this recognition because I did not do it alone," Rosas said. "There are so many other unsung public servants who have made their respective contributions in making public office truly a public trust."

Lim is 4th senator to give up entire pork

From page A1

Pauilla Lacson and Jaime Aseron

Other senators are to meet in caucus in two weeks' time to come up with a common stand on what to do with the pork barrel in view of the deepening fiscal crisis.

Macapagal-Arroyo has urged senators and lawmakers to forgo their pork barrel next year to help the government reduce the budget deficit.

Members of Congress receive a total of P28 billion in pork barrel every year—P70 million for each member of the House of Representatives and P200 million for each senator.

Lacson, who gave up his pork barrel since 2002, said reporters that he was hopeful that more senators would join his "pork-less club."

"I hope this will snowball in the future that senators would give up the whole caboodle, the whole amount," he said.

Housewife consensus

At the House of Representatives, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. urged the senators to complement the effort of House members to cut their pork barrel allocation for next year by 30 percent.

De Venecia admitted that there were still many House members who were objecting to the cut to their PDAF and the Public Works Fund, both known as pork barrel, from P70 million to P40 million for this year.

But he said the approval was only "in principle" and that it would still be subject to the plenary approval by the Senate.

"We are still trying to gain 'housewife' consensus, because it's not easy. The ones who will get hurt are our constituents, but as I've said, all of us have decided to set an example," he said.

De Venecia added the action must be acted first "because by saving the nation, we save our parliamentary checks. Of what use to our villages, towns if the government collapses? Then we have nothing to gain."

But opposition congressmen questioned De Venecia's announcement of a pork cut, stating only a few congressmen were left at the end of the all-party caucus the other day when the cut was discussed with Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin.

Deputy Minority Leader Rolex Suplico (LDP, 5th dist., Isabela) said the emerging sentiments in the caucus was in fact against any cut.

Lacson wondered how the congressmen came up with the 30-percent cut in their pork barrel.

"Why not 40 or 50 percent?" he asked.

Even so, the Senate is taking its own sweet time in tackling the proposed cut in the pork barrel.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said yesterday the chamber should not be rushed into deciding on the proposals to cut the pork of senators.

"There's no rush," said Magsaysay, who reiterated that senators had until October to decide on the issue.

Magsaysay who has no qualms about slashing the P1.045 allocations in the proposed 2005 budget, said some meaningful projects demanded on funds the people would be derailed, or shelved, once the entire P28 billion in pork barrel was scrapped.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan said that senators would meet in caucus in two weeks to discuss how the country should deal with the fiscal crisis. They are to take up the two resolutions seeking to cut the pork barrel.

He was talking about the resolutions he filed with nine senators for a 50-percent reduction in the pork barrel and the resolution of Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. urging senators to give up their pork.

"We hope to be able to reach a consensus on the different resolutions on the Priority Development Assistance Fund," Pangilinan told reporters.

Eliminate all pork

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said opposition senators had no official stand on the issue yet.

He said the opposition was planning to file a joint resolution that would seek to eradicate the national budget and "eliminate" all kinds of pork barrel there.

Pimentel said the resolution would propose the deletion of all discretionary items and intelligence funds exempt those for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police and National Bureau of Investigation.

"Also, we want to suggest that all pork of the President, the Cabinet members and legislators would be deleted. This will set a good start for going through her budgeting," he said.

Under the law budgeting approach, one cannot realize the allocations because this would amount to technical malversation," he said.

Pimentel said the resolution would also propose that all revenues of government be deposited in the National Treasury.

"That means Pagcor funds and all other funds not deposited to the NT," he said.

His counterpart in the House said opposition congressmen would also propose a cut in the pork barrel allocations of the Arroyos.

As a matter of courtesy, the President's budget gets priority in the budget hearings, said House Minority Leader Francis Escudero (NPC, 1st dist., Sorsogon.)

"I hope observing courtesy will not be applied. Let's forget about those courtesies. It's not being impolite to let the President's pork," he said.

Escudero, who presides over the House of Representatives as the "mother of all pork," Antipolo Rep. Osmalik Pano yesterday called for the opening of the financial books of the chamber.

Pano lamented the "apparent hypocrisy of House leaders, who openly call for austerity measures but are conspicuously silent about how extravagantly they have been spending their funds."

"We have to do more to check chaos in search. Prudence and transparency should begin here at the House," Pano said.

De Venecia and other administration congressmen quickly accepted Pano's challenge.

De Venecia said that House finances were transparent and that its every centavo spent "is in savings to the treasury last June. We're the first agency of government to turn over savings," he said.

Internal budget

The House has a yearly internal budget of P2.8 billion to cover salaries of House members and staff, maintenance and operating expenses, a medical facilities fund.

The amount is separate from the P70 million in pork barrel received by each House member.

For a long time now, the entire House has been tainted by allegations of corruption and malfeasance. Now De Venecia orders all these allegations so that the institution can regain the trust and respect of the public," Pano said.

Pano is the head of the Sabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino, the personal party of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and one of the principal political strategists of the Arroyo camp in the 2004 elections.

Lakas and Kampi had been sniping at each other even before the 13th Congress opened for business in July. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Cecille Pablo

'Kabayan' is caretaker while GMA is in China

From page A1

named yesterday "government caretaker" during Ms Arroyo's absence. The President left for Beijing at 4 this morning and is scheduled to be back at 11:20 p.m. on Friday.

"The President told (Executive) Secretary Eduardo Ermita in person at 9 o'clock (yesterday) that the Vice President will be the caretaker," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Ms Arroyo delayed her intervention to Manila during a daylong Cabinet workshop while she conducted yesterday the entire Cabinet, including De Castro.

As caretaker, however, De Castro may have nothing more than a largely symbolic presence in Malacañang.

He cannot sign papers, appoint/remove officials or issue executive orders because his responsibility designation "is coordinative" with Ermita.

De Castro is expected to join the meetings of the caretaker committee—not inside Malacañang Palace but at the Presidential Guesthouse, which serves as the office of the executive secretary.

But De Castro is not about to complain.

He said he expected Ms Arroyo to still be on top of the government's day-to-day operations even while she was in Beijing.

"You know that you can run things more by remote control than, of course, if we are present at the site, we are ready for it," De Castro said the decision by phone.

Although he was seated right next to the President during the workshop, De Castro, as of 2 p.m. yesterday, had yet to see her side that he would be the caretaker.

The Vice President has traditionally been designated caretaker whenever the Chief Executive goes on a foreign trip.

The term "caretaker" is used because the title "acting President" would connote giving the Vice President more powers than just housekeeping.

In her previous terms, Ms Arroyo had named then Vice President Teofisto Guingona and Senate President Franklin Drilon as caretakers. The President left on the night of the Guingona appointment. Finally, in her absence, Ms Arroyo is often in touch with her executive secretary, the "little president," when given her daily update on the situation in the country.

Ms Arroyo, who had said she wanted De Castro to be her bridge to the poor, had promised to give him an office in Malacañang.

But, so far, De Castro still works out of the Office of the Vice President at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

Using his mass appeal and affinity with the masses, De Castro also serves as Ms Arroyo's "co-host" in her weekly "Pulong Bayan," or townhall meetings, where she discusses her priority programs with a select audience.

His demographics gives De Castro two concurrent positions in the Cabinet—as head of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and presidential adviser on overseas Filipino workers. He was set to take his oath as HUDCC chair yesterday, along with other new appointees to the Cabinet.

Ms Arroyo is to leave for China via a chartered Philippine Airlines plane, accompanied by First Gentleman Atty. Mike Arroyo and a number of members of the Cabinet and leaders of business.

Before going to Beijing, she will make a brief stopover in Guangzhou to receive a briefing on how the Chinese government handled the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak last year.

Her state visit will include a meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao. Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and former President Jiang Zemin, who still wields power as chair of the Central Military Commission.

Bush says war on terror can't be won

From page A1

theme of his reelection campaign.

"I don't think you run with it," Bush explained. "But I think you can't run with timidness or that those who use terror as a tool are less acceptable in parts of the world."

As recently as May 14, Bush had drawn a far sunnier picture. "People say, 'Can you win the war on terror?' the president said in Niles, Mich. "Of course we can."

It was unclear if Bush had meant to make the remarks, or if he misspoke. But White House officials said Bush was not signaling a change in policy, and they sought to explain his statement by saying he was emphasizing the long, arduous nature of the struggle.

Taken at their face value, however, Bush's words would put him closer to the positions of the European allies, who do not consider the war winnable and have long considered Bush's call for victory as simplistic and unhelpful rhetoric.

Democrats

Democratic control on Sen. making the issue of Bush's remarks.

"First it was 'Mission Accomplished' and he ridiculed the war for long, then he called it a catastrophic success and blamed the military," Terry spokesperson Allison Jobson jarred. "Now he says we can't win the war on terror, is this what (chief Bush political strategist) Karl Rove means when he calls for steady leadership?"

"What if President Reagan had said that it was be different to win the war against communism? What if other presidents had said it's not effective to win the war— the Cold War?" Democratic vice presidential candidate John Edwards said on ABC-TV's "Nightline" program. "The war on terrorism is absolutely winnable."

Bush's words were also resounding loudly, taking attention away from the carefully crafted convention and the president's appearances in his hardsground state after another.

On Monday as Bush campaigned in the must-win states of New Hampshire and Michigan, White House spokesperson Mindy Tucker Bond said that what Bush had meant was that the war on terror would not be won "in the conventional sense" with formal surrenders or treaties signed.

Bush also said Monday that he would have no different from others he made in the past.

The Bush campaign professed not to be worried that the president had gone off message.

"The American people have watched the president lead the war on terror decisively for three years," Bush-Cheney spokesperson Steven Schmidt said. "The people of this country know what his leadership is."

Politically dangerous

Jon Hill Carroll, a California-based Democratic strategist, said the comments—even if they were merely unfortunately phrased expressions of usually obvious truths—were politically dangerous because they spoke to the very heart of the president's reelection pitch.

"The foundation of his remaining popularity has always been 9/11 and the war on terror," he said. "The perception . . . is that he is steady and strong," Carroll said.

He saw no hypocrisy in Democrats playing the issue to the hilt, even though they had voted final over similar remarks by Kerry, for instance, Vice President Dick Cheney criticized Kerry for saying he could fight "a more effective war on terror" through "more strategic, more proactive, more intelligent war on terror" by laughing out his mockery his use of the word "strategic."

"Remember is fair play on this," Carroll said. "Implicit this is the fact."

Analysts said Bush's comments reflected both changes policy and political realities, and appeared intended in part to stress that even a dramatic breakthrough, like the capture of Osama bin Laden, would not by itself secure the nation's security.

"People who think it's been clear that we're dealing with an ideological struggle that affects a region, and not just a single movement or group," said Anthony Cordesman, a fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"It's certainly clear from what has happened in Iraq and Afghanistan, and in Pakistan for that matter, as well as in countries like Spain, that even al-Qaida cannot be defeated quickly or easily. And Iraq didn't transform Iraq, much less the Middle East."

On Tuesday Bush continues his pre-convention barnstorming, traveling to Nashville, Tennessee, to speak to the national convention of the American Legion and to Albuquerque, to attend a farm rally. He ends the long day of campaigning in another crucial state, Pennsylvania, where he makes a late-evening appearance at a picnic before returning to Washington. Reports by Hiz New York Times and AP

DOH scored for stand on population

By Blanche S. Rivera

POPULATION management advocates yesterday expressed alarm for the Department of Health's apparent lack of concern over the issue of population problems.

The Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) said the government would find it more difficult to provide social services if it did not acknowledge that the Philippines needed to take in its population.

PLCPD executive director Rolando Adea said this policy would ultimately work against the poor who need social and economic services the most.

"There are already 600-plus cities [such as] poor health services, education, etc. The more we delay dealing in solving the population problem, the more we'll see the worsening of the poverty situation," Adea told Inq7.net's Yahoo! newsroom.

The population now stands at 84 million with four babies born every minute. Experts say that by the time Pope John Paul II steps down, there will be 12.6 more Filipinos.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit had said it was not the DOH's job to control the population by promoting women's reproductive rights, while stressing that the government can address the needs of the present population.

"I think it's like the housing [issue] crisis. They're still in a state of denial over the population problem," said Michael Camacho Reyes, president of the Philippine Center for Population and Development.

Reyes said that while it was true that the DOH could not dictate the size of Filipino families, it was responsible for educating the people and making all options, including artificial methods of family planning, available to them.

He said that depriving the people of contraceptives would affect mainly the poor who cannot afford to buy those but have the biggest need for them.

Rodney Arce, chairman of the Population Advocates, said he finally plans many couples would resort to illegal abortions or worse.

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quizon

Republicans turn to 9/11 for Bush reelection

NEW YORK—Ignoring warnings not to make political capital out of Sept. 11, US Republicans did just that going into day two of their convention on Tuesday aimed at sending George W. Bush back to the White House.

Just miles from Ground Zero, where the 2001 attacks toppled the World Trade Center, the Republicans party kicked off by fear-mongering on Monday with an emotional appeal that stirred up memories of the worst attack ever on US soil.

Sen. John McCain, former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and a host of other speakers hailed Bush as a strong leader who deserved another four-year term to continue his post-9/11 war on global terrorism.

Many also disapproved their former foe Democratic challenger John Kerry, portraying him as a flake and waffling politician who consistently had found a way to be on both sides of every issue.

McCain, supported by many Americans for his service in the Vietnam War, hailed Bush's leadership since the attacks and dismissed any suggestion that his fight against terrorism was unjustified.

"We are engaged in a hard struggle against a cruel and determined adversary. Our enemies have made clear the danger they pose to our security and to the very existence of our culture... [But it] McCain told the convention.

"Only the most deluded of us could doubt the necessity of this war," he said in a speech repeatedly interrupted by applause. "President Bush deserves not only our support, but our admiration."

Rudolph McCain held off from personally attacking Kerry, other speakers ridiculed the Democratic senator from Massachusetts.

"This is no time to pick a leader who is weak on the war and wrong on taxes," said Dennis Hastert, Republican speaker of the House of Representatives.

Giuliani said Bush's reaction to the attacks had already "earned him a place in our history as a great American president," while also making repeated reference to Kerry.

"People in public office are entitled to change their minds," Giuliani said. "But John Kerry has made it the rule to change his position, rather than the exception."

The symbolism of the 9/11 attacks were never far-right for Bush, and the administration has said it has intelligence that al-Qaeda may want to strike again before the election.

A high-tech intelligence analysis center with staff drawn from 20 agencies opened in New York last week to guard against the possibility of terrorist strikes.

WMD? Amnesia all-black dot gun, secret service agents, blew "leak public and other security personnel have warned the normally bustling area around Madison Square Garden into a virtual fortress.

The Republicans featured a constant stream of other reminders of the attacks, including Tom Ridge, whose Brennan husband died in the twin towers disaster and whose name is heading to Iraq. AFP

Filmmaker gets booed at GOP convention

NEW YORK—The Republican national convention thunderously booed filmmaker Michael Moore and his anti-George Bush documentary "Fahrenheit 9/11" when it was mentioned in a speech on the floor on Monday.

As Moore looked on from the press gallery, Sen. John McCain took the film to task while defending the decision to invade Iraq in the choice between "war and a graver threat."

"Don't let anyone tell you otherwise," McCain said.

"Not our political opponents. And certainly not a disingenuous filmmaker who would have us believe that Saddam's Iraq was an oasis of peace when in fact it was a place of indescribable cruelty, torture chambers, mass graves and prisons that destroyed the lives of the small children held in its dirty thrall."

The 3,000 Republican delegates gathered at Madison Square Garden erupted into unbridled boos at the mention of the film, which accuses Bush of lying about the reasons for the Iraq war and going after the wrong enemy.

"That line was so good I'll use it again," McCain quipped. "Certainly not a disingenuous filmmaker."

The boos cascaded down.

Republicans also brought out an ally in their campaign to paint Saddam Hussein's rule to bolster Bush's reelection bid, at their national convention.

Dressed in an Islamic headscarf, Zainab al-Suwaij on Monday told thousands of party faithful that their guests from Bush had been right to unleash his aggressive war that brought down the Baghdad dictator.

"We lived under a murderer who used every weapon in his arsenal against us, from exile to mass murders to poison gas," she said. AFP

ZIERBA Bureau (center), Tara Brautigam (right) and Debra Burlingame, who lost relatives in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks address delegates to the Republican National Convention at Madison Square Garden in New York on Aug. 30. AP

Iraqi civilians reveal a slice of their lives

NEW YORK—An Iraqi man dips his foot into a huge crater where a bomb fell, now filled with muddy water. A bedraggled family stares straight into the camera in front of the garbage dump that is their home.

Just south of the hearts of the Republican Convention, and the "noisy protests surrounding it, is an exhibition of photographs showing life after the US-led invasion through an Iraqi lens.

Many of the pictures, poignant in their simplicity, reveal a small slice of ordinary Iraqi life. The 30 photographs, part of a collection of 170, were displayed Monday at the New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

The captions under the photos read like notes to a friend or family member: "Inside Hani's living room," or "Hamed Salman's sister, wife, and brother Mohammed."

Zeph Seligman, Community Arts Foundation Inc., a Budgling New York-based nonprofit organization working to help communities document their lives, and Pixel Press, an online magazine, provided three women and six men in Baghdad and Fallujah with disposable cameras to click scenes of their lives.

"It was a matter of kind of curiosity on our part to allow people to express themselves, and there is no better example of a group of people who need a voice," said Michael Udell, co-founder of the Budgight foundations.

The photos depict the lives of ordinary Iraqis, some living in squalor like the family which shares the garbage dump with a few cows, others playing like the two little boys captured on the a palm tree with cheeky smiles and no guns.

Udell said his fellow cofounder, Taj Forer, said they hoped the photos "raise questions and provide an alternative to the mainstream media's depiction of the Iraq invasion."

As the visitors trickled in, one of them said he saw hauntingly familiar images.

"I can relate to some of them [photographs], like the one with the television which the family had bought to watch the war on, or the one with men carrying shovels on the streets, and then digging graves to bury the dead," said Krishna Barbados, 21, an NYU student, who saw the exhibition on the way to class. AP

Cops brace for more clashes with protesters

NEW YORK—Police are bracing for more confrontations with protesters after a soldier stuck in Madison Square Garden in which a plainclothes detective was pushed from his scooter and pummeled by a protester, witnesses and police said.

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly called it "a blatant, vicious attack" on detective William Temple, who was briefly knocked unconscious Monday and was hospitalized with head injuries that were not life-threatening. His assailant was being sought by police.

"People started tugging at his bike and pushing him around," said Bob Storey, a 22-year-old Ohio college student. "Finally they just pushed him off his bike."

Hundreds of police in riot gear and on horseback swept in to disperse the crowd, chanting, "Move!" less than a dozen arrests were made as protesters yelled back, "Whose streets? Our streets!"

Police were preparing for further unrest on Tuesday as protesters prepared to disrupt the subway during rush hour and Republican Party boss's weight-watcher addressing and rightwing.

In the months leading up to the convention, activists designated Tuesday an official day of civil disobedience, with plans to take street closures and even roadblocks aimed at the offices of corporations with links to the Bush family or the Republican Party. They planned to start early in the day by harassing Republicans at a breakfast meeting of lobbyists at the Crown restaurant in Central Park.

Monday's violence capped an otherwise peaceful day of small demonstrations focusing on health care, civil rights, homelessness and other issues the protesters say the President Bush and Republicans have failed the country. AP

US FILMMAKER Michael Moore gestures to photographers after US Sen. John McCain made mention of his presence as the Republican National Convention. Moore was denied access to the convention floor. AP

Sharon presents timetable for Gaza pullout

JERUSALEM—Prime Minister Ariel Sharon presented the most detailed timetable yet for a withdrawal from the Gaza Strip to his Likud Party on Tuesday, and warned party rebels that the plan "will be implemented, period."

A Sharon ally in the Cabinet said the evacuation of Jewish settlements in Gaza could begin by the end of the year, or several months ahead of schedule.

The initial plan tabled by a withdrawal from Gaza and four small West Bank settlements in four stages, to be completed by September 2005, with a three-year time period to the Cabinet for approval.

However, with opposition mounting in Likud and in the Cabinet, Sharon has called a series of meetings by making early advance payments on compensation that would encourage many of the 8,000 Gaza settlers to leave voluntarily in coming months, according to officials in Sharon's office.

In Gaza, a Palestinian man wearing an explosives belt resembling underpants and hidden under his clothing was stopped at the Erez crossing into Israel. The man had been in line with thousands of Palestinian workers making their way into Israel every morning.

Soldiers became suspicious when they spotted the man, who looked like an television device. Soldiers ordered him to remove the explosives, officials said.

Erez has been a repeated target of Palestinian militants, though the area majority of suicide bombers in the past four years have come from the West Bank. Gaza is closed off, and militants have had trouble crossing Israel from the strip.

In Jerusalem, Sharon opened his morning with Likud legislators with a warning not to sabotage the Gaza withdrawal: "You know my views on the subject. The disengagement plan will be implemented, period," he said.

The first key date in Sharon's timetable for a Gaza withdrawal is Sept. 16, when the Cabinet is scheduled to approve the principles of compensating and evacuating settlers. Officials said advance payments to settlers would total a few months.

On Sept. 28, Cabinet ministers will be given draft legislation for carrying out the withdrawal, and the bill will be approved by the Cabinet on Oct. 24, Sharon said. By Nov. 1, the legislators will be presented with the framework for a first of three votes. AP

Milosevic opens defense at war crimes trial

THE HAGUE, Netherlands—Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic opened his long-delayed defense at the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal on Tuesday, describing the battles of his Serbian people as self-defense against internal rebellions and external attacks by Islamic warriors.

Milosevic, charged with genocide and crimes against humanity in the Balkans, portrayed the Serbs as victims rather than aggressors. According to him, Serbs were also victims of a plan supported by the United States and Europe to break up Yugoslavia, of an attempt to seize out Croatia's Serb minority, and of a Bosnian-financed plot to create an Islamic state in Bosnia.

Milosevic's statement, lunching the second half of what is seen as the most important war crimes trial since World War II, began with a complaint to the judges that he was allotted only four hours to make his opening statement, unlike prosecutors were given three days to outline their case when the trial began in February 2002.

But presiding judge Patrick Robinson ordered Milosevic to proceed, saying the defense case had repeatedly been delayed by his lead health.

Originally set for April, it was postponed five times when doctors determined that Milosevic's blood pressure was dangerously high.

But the judges, anxious to put the trial back on track, placed the opening of the defense at the top of Tues. day's agenda. Milosevic's health, and the possible appointment of a defense lawyer against his will may be discussed later, the judges ruled.

Milosevic, 63, faces 66 counts of war crimes for allegedly instigating three wars during the violent breakup of the Yugoslav federation in the 1990s when more than 200,000 people were killed. AP

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Bata repeats over Alex, bags ₱1.1

THERE are still tricks up fifty-year-old Efren "Bata" Reyes' sleeves.

Treated to the full by reigning World Pool champion Alex Pagulayan, Reyes displayed precise shot-making and ball control to prevail by the slimmest of margins, 13-12, and capture the On Cue 3- Cushionwood Conquest Cuetoberfest at the Galleria Trade Hall of fashion city's Esther-it Mahakiyong City.

Giving up to his "Magician" moniker, Reyes did not give Pagulayan a turn to come to the table in the 25th and final rack as he duplicated his 9-7 conquest of the Filipino-Canadian in the quarterfinals.

Reyes, a fellow de Dasmariñas native, pocketed each ball with utmost precision and caught his breath only after he sank the No. 8 ball, freeing the cue ball on the game-clinching five. "I had, the second game their heavy hand applause.

Reyes had earlier calmed back 14-year-old Fabregas sensation Wei Chicheng, 11-6, in the semifinals.

"Gen na ako nakinamasan nang pinawod nang ako, at nakakagaan na ako sa pamalo (I came in my element when the right ball went in and I'm as natural of victory," said Reyes.

For his feat, the 56-year-old Reyes earned ₱80,000 (P1.1 million), while Pagulayan, a Canadian citizen who recently recognized Filipino citizenship, received ₱30,000.

It was a constant fight throughout. Pagulayan took control after scoring on Reyes' break in the 11th rack, drilling in a grab of a 4-9 combination shot to enjoy a 9-7 edge.

Reyes savaged the lead at 11-10 and kept it at 12-11. But Pagulayan, who romped to the finals via an 11-2 triumph over Django Bustamante, held his break and forged the decision, 13-12.

Reyes, however, won't be fazed.

He making it to the semifinals of the event organized by ABS-CBN and supported by Planet Sports, both Bustamante and Wu pocketed ₱5,000 each. With a report from Marlon Bernardino

UNMOVED: Donald Custer Blossom turns in a strike.

Big show by SEAG rivals alarms RP sports officials

By Antonio T. Bigcas Jr.
News Editor

ZURICH... While the Philippine delegation returned yesterday with nothing to show after a fortnight of action in the 26th Olympic Games, its Southeast Asian neighbors, particularly Thailand, brought home a bumper crop of medals.

After the final day of action in the Games, the Philippines was again shut out of the medal board after coming so unstable-high close in taekwondo on Saturday, the penultimate day of the Games.

Thailand, on the other hand, is enjoying its "best Olympics ever," according to a Thai broadcaster.

The Thais came home with seven medals, including three golds, one silver and three bronzes—good for 35th place overall in the medal standings and fourth—behind China, Japan and Korea—among Asian nations that vied in Athens.

Indonesia, also in the medal picture with four medals—one gold, one silver and two bronzes.

No other Southeast Asian nations won a medal, but the performances of Thailand and Indonesia in Athens have alarmed Philippine sports officials in view of the proximity of the 2005 Games, which Manila is hosting next year.

"I'm not saying it's anything I serious in the 2005 Games," said Cobo Ibarra, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

"We just hope that the athletes experience will further improve our athletes in the Games in the Southeast Asian Games."

Thailand and Indonesia sent the most number of athletes among the Southeast Asians. Thailand had 40 while Indonesia had 39. Malaysia was third with 26 athletes followed by the Philippines and Singapore with 14 each.

Vietnam, which struggled in Southeast Asian sports, never when it was the host for the last year's Games, had 11 athletes followed by Laos (2), Cambodia (4) and Myanmar (2).

While Malaysia did not win a medal either, the fact that it had more athletes in Athens indicates it is still a force to reckon with in the SEA Games. It means it has more athletes who stay or surpassed Olympic qualifying standards.

Thailand each two gold and two bronze medals in women's weightlifting. The Philippines did not send a participant in weightlifting, but the president of the Philippine Weightlifting Association, Rep. Monico

HOME IS THE HEROINE: Taekwondo jin Mary Antoinette Rivero arrives at the NAIA with coach Jesus "Jabel" Morales.

Cardinals, Lions fight for life today

IT'S down to one final match for the best Ateneo Lions and the Magnus Cardinals.

And, apparently, it's not going to be easy when the two teams gun for a last shot at the Finals next against front-runners Hi-powered Help Alaska and Philippine Christian U Dolphins in the PCCUI men's basketball tournament.

San Beda battles PCU at 2 p.m., while Magnus faces Ateneo at 4 p.m. today at the Rizal Coliseum.

While the Altas and the Red Lions, both with 9-4 win-loss records, aim for a twice-to-beat advantage in the semifinals, the Lions and the Cardinals can only hope to remain in contention.

San Beda, Magnus and elite San Sebastian Stags are tied with idle San Sebastian in fourth place with 7-6 records.

A loss would put any of the three teams out of the running, unless they all end up having their games. There will be a playoff to see all a tie.

PCU remains the only unbeaten team in the second round, standing. Reigning champion guard Jeff Jeffrey Hubalde in the first round, but Beda is coming off an overtime win against San Sebastian, 84-86, last Monday.

Jasmine B. Hays

Saints rout Holy Angel squad for win No. 11

By Mari Anthony Reyes

DLSU'S Mark Cardona and Jerwin Gaco dispute ball possession with AdU's Rommel Tagupa in their first-round game won by the Falcons. ARNOLD ALMACEN

Archers seek No.4 against Falcons

LA SALLE'S resurgent Archers try to extend their winning streak to four when they clash with the Adamson Falcons today in the UAAP senior basketball tournament at the Philsports Arena.

"We're getting into our groove. The guys are more doing their respective roles," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

The Archers have bounced back from an alarming 4-4 record with three straight victories — their longest win streak of the season.

In the other secure match, the University of the East Warriors tackle the reeling University of the Visayas Tigers at 1:30 p.m.

While La Salle has recovered from a recession start, Adamson has yet to get its act together. The Falcons hold a promising 3-1 slate before being tied on Aug. 26 but were outscored due to inclement weather.

Jamaine D. Ryo

Cebuano cagers nip Laguna in 2 OTs

CALAPE, Bohol—Ronald Bono sank the winning basket as Tebo Eagles (Cebu Tebco) pulled off an 82-80 double overtime decision over Laguna Spring Monday in a thrilling match featuring the division leaders in the MBC (National Basket Corporation) semifinal finals at the Calape Gymnasium here.

The 5-foot-10 Bono stuffed Laguna's Sherlee Kalaw with 3.9 seconds left to the second overtime period to bank it at the shot of Danny Capulong and give the Tebco their sixth straight win.

"Alam ko mahigpit pagsasalitaan kami nung timeout kasi bubuo," said an elated Bono after entering the locker of businessman Lito Gillesania Jr., Alburo has sold to Arby Madrid victory.

It was a heartbreaking loss for Spring of MBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro as it led by seven points late in the fourth quarter. Laguna, however, still kept the top spot in the finals with a 5-4 record.

The Diego Isabel Tebco also remained firmly on top of the South Division with a runaway 8-1 slate.

Tebco Eagles (82)—Bono 19, Antonio 15, Ababa 11, Dacuyan 10, Lacap 8, Mercado 6, Quilban 6, Nogales 5, Dela Cruz 3, Nabor 0, Gallarde 0, Cabrera 0.

Laguna (80)—Pajac 17, Garcia 16, Nelson 15, Gacabon 9, Asuncion 8, Gerlach 5, Quicoy 4, Cabahug 3, Dizon 2, Lingat 0, Bautista 0.

Quarters: 17-14, 39-41, 61-62, 80-80 (reg.), 73-71, (OT), 82-80 (2OT).

RP 'AWAKENING' IN ATHENS

Heartwarming, heartbreaking

(Conclusion)

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.

LIMPING back to the corner of the mat with the score tied at 7-7, Donald Geisler III, his ankle dislocated after that third-ring clash in medal-rush Tuesday, tried Hidenori Suzukawa, trained on fighting. But they refused to let him.

He was carried out of the pavilion in a stretcher to the applause of the crowd. No effort from get-tough opponent-referee Ibrahim Shaaban was rewarded, which had previously jeered Mary Antoinette Rivas on her march against the Greek girl.

Sibunkhet Gy, who carried the Philippine flag in his hand by chasing a scratched, sore backhorse. After losing a close fight in the first round against Cuban Lisset Ramirez, he never got into the ring-hugs round because Bunsa lost right in the next round. Only losers in the eventual finalists get a chance to the quest.

The experience is unfortunately, which became part of the official Philippine programs only in 2000 in Sydney, showed there is a modest potential for Filipinos in the Olympian outside of boxing.

"We're proud that in our own little way we can contribute to even honors for the country," said Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert Seneriquez.

"While we accept the responsibility that we could win medals, as Tony had almost done, we salute the other sports-medal chasers for their efforts."

Hurdler Jeanette Aleli Campo, there were no heroes. The Filipinos were confused. Swimming did manage three Philippine records—one by Miguel Molina and two by Eli Ann Jaclyn Amiguiberto.

Pangilinan clocked 1:22.07 and 1:51.10 in the women's 100- and 200-meter breaststroke, respectively, to break her own marks, and Molina timed 2:10.3 for the men's 200 breast to shave the 11-year-old record of Lee Christopher of 2:10.75.

Otherwise, the Filipinos were an embarrassment at the Olympic Aquatic Center, a list shared by the team's veteran, Miguel Molina, who finished last in his heat in event, the 1,500-meter freestyle.

"Marahil can't describe how embarrassed I was with the performance," said the 22-year-old Molina.

The other Filipino swimmers didn't do well, either, but Philippine Sports Commission chief Eric Buhain saw a bright future for the young squad who lived out some in next year's Southeast Asian Games.

Of all swimmers, James Wendt is the youngest at 17. Angelbraun is 18, Molina 20, and Raphael Dena and Herndon 22.

This team, which is "young and blooming," will be the nucleus of a powerhouse squad for the SEAG Games. And the Olympic Games next is their "coming out party," said Buhain, himself a former Olympic swimmer.

Rising, other individual events for the Philippines in the Olympics, has some up injury for two Olympic runs.

Middleweight Christopher Cunan and lightweight Violito Payla, four days first-round bouts, said that the scheduling is extremely. Business this and light flyweight Harry Tolcinas—horrified their first-round opponents but lost their next bouts.

Manny Lopez, president of the three-year boxing Association of the Philippines, said that the scheduling was wrong and other boxing programs.

"We will find out what went wrong," he said after taking responsibility for the failure of boxing, which has not sent an Olympic medal since 1996, when Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco won a silver in Atlanta.

"Boxing needs a full reassessment of its programs," Philippine Olympic Committee president Cojuangco agreed. "We need that to ensure the challenge of Thailand to beat your SEA Games."

The Thais have the gold, one silver and two bronze in boxing in Athens.

Jayzel said the Athens experience was "an awakening" for Philippine sports and its leaders.

"It has shown us that, apart from losing, there are other sports which we can succeed in the next Olympics, like track-records, archery and shooting.

Shooting had one entry for the Philippines—in the trap—but it was more for the experience for shooter Jethro Dionisio, who finished 56 in shooting the same day he was also competing in double trap in provincial shooting.

Mikhaylovsky two-to-battle, but it was apparent from the start that they were not open Olympic standards. Lorna Bolipata had a fair showing, but other national Sabanayan would not even reach their personal records. Galina Kopachova is in the long jump, but still her 6.0 second of 6.83m, in Heidi Strickler of 7.0 jumps.

Bonaventia, the Philippines' last entry, could not be found. Only Dr. Vic plans thank-you's' 400 meters, about 10 minutes after the Philippine final.

And so, as Filipino sports leaders had done so often after each Olympiad, it's back to the drawing board, and the first one will be Beijing—or the next Olympics—in the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

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Goodbye kiss to Greece

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

This is not Wimbledon, where I write almost everyday during the grasstime tennis season.

But thank you, just the same.

If the overdressed screaming was part of the society pretension, you've more than made your point.

The Games finished splendidly, with no terror incident whatsoever, and you truly deserve the biggest pats-on-the-back of the Games.

You put a hound on all and proved what the great Jim Murray had said that, "neither wars, nor hysteria, nor terrorists, nor restricted bureaucrats will affect Olympics."

You've just affirmed that the Olympics, which you started, is indestructible.

***

Thank you for the splendid party which you made into a successful celebration of peaceful Games.

Your opening ceremonies, unforgettable as they were, may be rivaled by the ones they recreated in Barcelona and Sydney.

There was the arches in 1992 in Spain who lit the Olympic Flame with an arrow shot into a cauldron, or the Indian who lighted a world record in Australia with an bright, burning opening ceremony.

But nothing beats how you dusted your own Olympics in sweet calmness.

There's a beautiful angel of a girl "dressing the Flame and dancing with all the kings."

Your Games started on the height of summer, but closed out with the rally evening air while putting the nature of autumn, under a full moon.

And you telling the world with that kiss from a young girl, like a lil-o child's dream.

Big show by SEAG rivals alarms . . .

Meanwhile, runners Athena and even marched with the athletes during the opening ceremonies.

The weightlifting gold medals were won by Udomporn Polsak in the women's 63-kg class and Pimsiri Thirapratsri in the women's 69-kg class. Rumsiri and Anan Wiwatchaisawas won the bronze in the 56-kg and 48-kg classes, respectively.

Thailand's other gold came from boxing through light welterweight Manus Boonjumnong, a member of Filipino boxer Nonito Donaire. He was one of three Thais, one of the six who qualified for Athens, who made it to the medal round.

Indonesia's only gold came from badminton where Taufik Hidayat won the men's singles over Korea's Shon Seung Mo. Hidayat was one of the 15 Indonesian athletes left behind to shine.

Indonesia's other name from weightlifting through Eniarti Lina Kusnawan in the 53-kg.

The performances of Thailand and Indonesia and the promise showed by Malaysia are an unmistakable message to the Philippines.

It says: Manila, here we come.

CARLOS Moya of Spain returns to Brian Baker of the United States at the US Open Monday. Moya prevailed. AFP

Favorites show mettle

NEW YORK—Former World No. 1 Serena Williams' march toward reclaiming her US Open title began in unnerving fashion on Monday when she overpowered Isabelle Ehrlenova, 6-1, 6-3, in a first-round match.

Williams made quick work of Ehrlenova, taking just 52 minutes to finish off the 20-year-old from the Czech Republic in front of 23,000 fans at the further Arthur Ashe Stadium.

There were no major upsets on opening day of the $17.8 million Grand Slam event as men's top seed Roger Federer hammered Lee s 7-5, 6-3, 6-4 win over 2002 French Open champ Albert Costa and sixth seed Andre Agassi defeated Ashley Cooper, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4, 6-3.

Williams advances to the second round where she will square off with countrywoman Lindsay Davenport.

Second seed Amelie Mauresmo, who is searching for her first career Grand Slam title, routed Jane Maxine Ferry, 6-4, 6-2, on the opening day Augusta. At Tsurubaran, was also an opening day winner, beating Israel Ashley of the US, 7-5, 6-2.

Ninth seed Nina Zvonareva, of Russia, routed Slovakia's Dominika Cibulkova, 6-1, 6-1, and Australia Capriati came charging back to defeat Zimbabwe Cha Evans, 2-6, 6-1, 6-2.

On the men's side, third seed Carlos Moya followed Australian Wayne Arthurs in the second round by defeating American Brian Baker, 6-7 (5/7), 6-4, 6-4, 6-2, and Cyril Saulnier, of France, outlasted Britain's Greg Rusedski, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 5-6, 7-6 (9/7).

Other seeded men's winners included 14th seed Nicolas Kiefer, 26th seed Andrei Pavel and 28th seed Jiri Novak, of Czechoslovakia.

Martin retires

American Todd Martin announced his retirement on Monday, following a five-round loss to France's Fabrice Santoro. Martin once reached the No. 6 world ranking and was runner-up at the 1999 US Open. AFP

SPORTSWATCH

DLSU women netters enter semis

DLSU women netters entered semifinals of the Philippines 2-1, and advanced to the semifinals of the women's team event in the 2004 Milo All-Students Tennis Championships over the weekend at the Rizal Parade Sports Club in Pasig. DLSU joined University of Santo Tomas, College of St. Benilde and DLSU-A in the Final Four of the event to engage each by UTAP and supported by adidas and Fresca Natasya as the official ball. In the men's team event, DLSU ousted DLSU-B, 3-0. DLSU blanked Ateneo 3-0. Polytechnic University of the Philippines ousted DLSU-B, 3-0, and DLSU-A squeezed past UST-B, 2-1.

Phlta to host three int'l junior tilts

PHILSTARS: Tennis Association, in cooperation with Rizal Tennis School and Philippine Columbian Association, will host three international junior tennis tilts from Sept. 21 to Oct. 10 at the Ynares Center Cultural and Sports Center in Pasig City. The first event, billed as the Asian 14 Under Open, will be held on Sept. 21-25. Scheduled from Sept. 27 to Oct. 3 is the Centrum Global International Juniors Championships. Some 64 players of the Philippine Columbian Association's Champ program will face 4-13, Magbutokan in ages at the Phlta office (525-6424) and Ynares Tennis Education Foundation (631-6186).

NBA Madness features 3-on-3

THE 3-ON-3 basketball's favorite pick-up version, will be given a new twist when Globe Gamez brings this competition to new heights at the NBA Madness set at the SM Megamall Parking Lot C from Sept. 3 to 5. Basketball-crazy kids aged 14-22 years old may form themselves into groups of up to four each and register on-site from for the Globe Bench NBA 3-on-3. There are two categories for the event: 14 under-18 and under-22. The age category of the team will be determined by the age of the oldest member. Interested participants may now register at Gamez's store. NBA Madness 2004 is sponsored by Coca-Cola, Globe Telecom, Converse, Globe Sports and MPIC. For information, call Events work at (0918) 777 just and for Mindanao, Bicolandia or Iloilo.

Bicolanos hold golfest at Navy course

THE IMPERIAL Wood Golfers Association, composed of Bicol golfers in Metro Manila, conducted a golf tournament and Christmas golf tournament on Friday at the Philippine Navy Golf Course to raise funds for the rehabilitation of Bicolandia Gamez and the Polytechnic Basilica. The golf time to start 10 a.m. to noon. Total (P1,000) covers green fee, caddie fee, meals and a shirt. Non-being collected by the course. Participants can also visit the Bicol Golfers Association Office with Jacinto Ave., Intramuros and from their contact The Manila Times at 410-4268 or Dr. Gonzalo Roman (0917-524-8080).

FC Patafa induction man guest

FIRST Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo will be the guest speaker and inducting officer when the national executive board of the Philippine Track and Field Association takes their oath on Sept. 10 at the Century Park Hotel ballroom. Immigration Commissioner Alipio F. Fernandez Jr. will be installed as new PATAFA president. Former president Lydia Kiat also received a fruit four-year mandate that will extend to the 15th year as athletics big boss. Other officers are PSC chief Eric Buhain and Commissioners Wilfredo Ramirez, Bonifacio de Luna, Lorna Montenegro and Michael Barredo. POC officials, led by Cebu Caloft and some sports association officials, are also expected to attend. Among to be sworn in as Pasmo Fc executive vice president, Olivan, VP for Administration, Chan Tong Young, VP for Finance, Lawyer Rosario Sering, VP for Training and Selection, Ben Silva-Rello and Marlon Pacheco, secretary general and deputy secretary general, and Pao Requerio, secretary-treasurer for local government units. The regional directors will also be inducted.

Best of the Best taekwondo on

THE SAMSUNG Best of the Best National Taekwondo Championships, featuring fifteen Olympians Mark Jundelovic Rivera, Donald Geisler and Shermie Go, contests at the Gerardo Activity Center in Makati City today. 2:30pm to 4:00 pm encoding for females in the three-category tournament starting at 7 p.m. on today on the contests (Mondo holds 14 the five days. Olympians Rachel Anne Daquis and taekwondo practitioners from Batangas, Laguna, Pampanga, Bulacan, Baguio, Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija. Survivors of the Cebu and Davao regional eliminations are also in the fold, making the event truly nationwide tempo.

GCAP 5-stag series begins Monday

NEWLY elaborative and experiencing matches when the Cambanar Golfers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 5-Stag Series series begins on Monday at the Los Baños Coliseum. Patrick Antonio, GCAP president, said all seven GCAP activities will be staged at the Los Baños Coliseum every Monday. Organizers of the series are Dagupan Complexo 2000 and Pagcor. The GCAP members are Sec. Ito Peiano, Mayor Nanu Agcaoili, Fely Ruiz-Abaya, Patrick Antonio, Mayor Nathan Arquiza, Richard Bates, Budjett Umbaca, Rocelle Bautista, Wag Ambida, Secretariat Lito dela Rosa, Pete Fernandez, Jerry Lacsamana, Bunggo Tong, Leslie Arcilla, Ito Pelaez, Roman Mascarinas, Noelle Ngo, Darry Palmore, Boy de Rosa, Boy Rizo, Manny and Antonio Sardon, Blandy Valentino and Bong Villanueva. Alexandrite, Cavite International Inn, 78 of San Ramon Bautista and Wild Fire of San Jose Mission Hacienda Homes in the "Annual Lao Chiao-Si-Sagg Derby" approach.

Negros lasses stall NCR XI; Davao scores

REGIONS Oriental held title favorite National Capital Region to a 1-1 draw and Davao romped to its third straight win yesterday in the PBA Superferry Secondary Women's Football Championships at the Manila Sports Center in Mandaluyong City.

The Negros side, 1-0 down after Regina Monday, poured in the a tough out to reach for NCR, which was starting off a 6-3 victory Eastern de Oro-Misamis Oriental late Monday in the 16 women-tournament for women 19 years and older.

Negros Oriental took the lead in Group B with a 2-0-0 mark down four record while NCR dropped to second at 2-1-0.

Davao continued to find it own Group A by whipping Iloilo, 3-1, just ahead of Region which scored its second win in two with a 9-0 thumping of Zamboanga.

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EPSON

After "A Walk To Remember," comes "THE NOTEBOOK" ... fall in love again

Like "A Walk to Remember," "The Notebook" is another adaptation of best-seller writer Nicholas Sparks. It is a story of a poor, young country boy who falls in love with a rich girl during one heated summer romance, but is eventually faced with her parents' disapproval and her mother's unseen ivy home. The loving couple are further separated by the war, but do ultimately meet again, years later, with one having "moved on" and the other...well, not so much. Romance, laughs and love, ensue.

Romance is a tough movie to crack, but I think this film manages to capture its pure essence with innocence and vulnerability in full use, not to mention a hefty dose of chemistry between the two leads, Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams, both of whom offer powerful performances. Audiences will get into both of their characters from the get-go and will be particularly moved by Gosling, but why hadn't really shown to the side of his sharp bolder. Here, he played the "romantic guy" and pulled it off gangbusters!

Viewers can relate to the film's deeper message about the ongoing power whose love and fail for many every sweet moment there mind meeting, their love making moment, the possible break-up etc.,...Every romantic genius this romantic/epic the "follow the arrow" routine, the beat ride through the grass-filled pond, etc...) and every predictable, yet quite believable and poignant, turn is massive.

This film also sings a credible love struggle a la WHERE ROBIN ALAMBRA. But movies can always appreciate, particularly when all of the characters are fleshed out enough to truly be invested in its outcome. Cudgen is dashing, James Marsden played the third wheel best and did so admirably. This film is packed with plenty of swoony goodness, great acting, palpable chemistry, swoon-worthy sings, impressive cinematography, romance galore and even some humorous touches to sway things light.

SM CINEMA

what to watch

Romance

THE NOTEBOOK

now showing

up next

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Trickles

THE PERENNIAL problem of floods is a cause of worry for everyone living in Manila. A recent symposium at the University of the Philippines featured geologist Fabian Rodolfo expounding on how daily the Manila city is farmed out. The poor with their dependence on scientific waste, the wealthy with their burning developments and the logging they profit from, the middle class and vending, too, with their flatpanels; and the governments, which covers everything, including natural systems of drainage, with concrete, and which cannot (or will not) enforce laws: all these come together to create the nightmare that is the Philippines whenever heavy rains occur.

The surprising thing about Rodolfo's observations was that garbage, according to him, wasn't the cause of the mess that Metro Manila and other areas become during the recent rains. Garbage doesn't help—but there are deeper reasons.

It should be a cause for alarm that our country lost more lives to the recent rains than did Taiwan, which bore the brunt of the typhoon that recently passed its outskirts. This goes to show how perilous the lives of so many of our people are. But it's not as if we're unused to strong monsoon rains.

If there is one big lesson to be gained from Rodolfo's remarks, it is that the idea that government can do everything, and is responsible for everything, has become increasingly outmoded. While it is true that governments have vast regulatory functions and powers, there is still the element of private responsibility. For example, government since the administration of President Ramon Magsaysay has made a fetish out of providing houseguests with artesian wells. And yet there are also many private developments and neighborhoods that have also installed artesian wells, and other kinds of wells with pumps. As Rodolfo pointed out, pumping water out of subterranean areas lowers the level of the ground—enough, over time, to make some more flood-prone.

The real question then, from the recent experience of millions of Filipinos, is, what can we do to reduce the calamitous effects of floods?

One change that can be done at little cost but which requires something more previous—cooperation and initiative—is to restore the system of numerous shorts that have been scrapped. In general, governments and the schools work well together when there are typhoons like in public indignations ordered by the mayors during last week's floods indicates, neither the Department of Education nor many city and municipal authorities, nor even private schools, have an organized system for dealing with heavy rains. The result was best exemplified by the government, which called off work the day after the worst of the rains, because so many people had gotten sick or stuck in the floods the previous day.

Another change, of course, is putting an end to construction projects that commence after the last season. This is simply laziness on the part of local and national executives.

The most fundamental change, however, requires citizens to put an end to the bad habit of passing the buck to government in order to enjoy the self-deforming narcissism of complaining about officials when it rains. As Rodolfo's observations indicate, there is plenty of blame to go around for flooding. If, as he says, a big part of the problem is, indeed, the negligence of government in enforcing regulations and laws, who will regulate the regulators? The only answer is, the electorate. So what does the electorate intend to do about local and national officials who fail to solve problems that crop up year after year?

The same applies for residents of private developments that have been built in flood-prone areas, or which now suffer from a lower ground level because of unregulated tapping of underground water reservoirs. Those who sell houses and lots have a responsibility to their buyers to ensure that all laws have been complied with, and the responsibility of the community is assured even after the developer have made their pile.

If we are advocating responsibility and accountability on the part of public officials, we can do no less than demand and cooperate responsibility on self.

Let's work faster to promote coco diesel

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I RECEIVED three letters and a phone call in response to the June 9 column ("Coco diesel as renewable source of fuel"). The caller wanted to know where he could buy coco diesel. I didn't know where, so I referred him to the Philippine Coconut Authority in Quezon City.

Of the three letters, two were from the PCA and one from the Department of Energy. Energy Secretary Vincent Perez expressed appreciation to this column for "advocating the use of Coco-Biodiesel to lessen dependence on imported crude oil," and then recommended what the DOE was doing to "face the groundwork" for the enforcement of coco diesel.

The DOE's letter went written by Thelma M. Tolentino, manager of the Public Relations and Information Office, and Jesusito L. Ordinario, manager of the Region IV Board in Davao City. I don't know which is the official mind and who is the right spokesperson of the DOE because the two letters contradicted. While Tolentino was thankful, Ordinario was angry.

"We in the PCA are heartened to find actually as your person," wrote Tolentino. "Your article must have caught the attention of our concerned industry and policymakers."

But Ordinario branched me as unsure, and unproductive and pieces of the column to a "delicate manner of trying to understand what the whole of coco means."

What did Ordinario see? I'll get to that with the rising price of crude oil, which we can do nothing about, at least we can lessen our dependence on imported crude. We are lucky to have a renewable source of diesel fuel: coco biodiesel which is non-polluting, unlike the petro-based diesel. I added that with the enormous coco resources in the country, the private sector and government agencies, especially the PCA, which was created solely to develop the coconut industry, are not being more aggressive in promoting coco diesel.

Ordinario didn't like that and proceeded to pick on the letter, but I'm not interested in regarding the PCA and that he is the expert. Since the letter is quite long, I will summarize its relevant points and follow it with my own comments:

1. He said it is not true anymore that bio-refining cocunder costs more than the amount a coco farmer would get selling the copra. The average copra price for years, he added that there is a law that provides that for every coconut tree cut, there should be a replacement seedling planted.

Comment. Farmers are still cutting their coconut trees. Where else are all those coco lumber coming from? That cocunder means that there still more trees than the cut trunks than from the roots, or else they would not cut them. A seedling will take 10 years to start bearing fruit. By the time the trees seedling bears fruit, six coconut plantations would be cut down and sold.

2. He said the world scene over coco-biodiesel is a "farce." He cited foreign institutions who labeled coconut oil as "the healthiest oil on earth."

Comment. That's one more opinion against the rest of the world. The cholesterol scare caused the bottom to drop out of the world price of copra. And Ordinario doesn't know what he is talking about. The chance he mentioned was speaking of virgin coconut oil, not the cooking oil sold in the supermarkets. Although virgin coconut oil is labeled as "unrefined, undeodorized," that is only half of the story. Coconut cooking oil is really "refined-bleached" as its raw form. But since it is subjected to heat, as in cooking, chemical changes take place that make it cholesterol-rich. Even PCA complaints say that virgin oil should not be subjected to heat, otherwise chemical changes will make it less healthful as cooking oil.

3. He said my allegation that the PCA "has not done anything as a sweeping statement devoid of foundation" and added that the PCA administrator "had made press releases several times in the to media, public and private fora and the agency's Regional Technical offices had been the conference and perusal of information for the general public." He cannot find his own office in Region IV had "conducted a series of CME processing machine demonstrations...to Mindanao and Visayas which elicited interest among prospective entrepreneurs."

Comment. Even if the PCA "had made press releases several times" about coco diesel, the fact that not know not many people know about it shows that it is a miserable failure. Coco biodiesel has been around since 2001, and it is now 2004. With the price of imported oil rising on unprecedented levels, shouldn't the PCA, the DOE and other government agencies work double-time to produce more coco diesel, make it available to more consumers, and thereby lessen our dependence on imported oil?

(The Philippines uses 73 billion liters of diesel a year. The recommendation is to mix 1 to 5 percent of coco diesel with petro diesel. If we are able to mix only one percent, that is 730 million liters of petro diesel less. If the mix is 5 percent, that's 3.6 billion liters less imported diesel.

(There are only about 300 small crushers selling coco diesel in coconut-rich areas. The PCA has also recently had one in Metro Manila where the most diesel-consuming vehicles are concentrated. Even the PCA itself doesn't sell any to the public.

(The PCA says more investors are needed to produce coco diesel and that it has no money. There are billions of idle pesos in coco-rich lands. Why are they not invested in coco diesel? I understand it can be produced by coco farmer cooperatives, locally in the Goodrich thing.

(The PCA has three multi-story office buildings in Quezon City plus regional offices full of employees. What have they been doing all these years?)

Reminders

THERE'S THE RUB

Gerardo de Quiroz

I MISSED the Argentina-Italy basketball finals, but I didn't miss the ESA-Lithuania battle for bronze. I hadn't seen following Olympic basketball closely on TV through Filipino broadcasting reports and knew that the games were no longer calling the 10 score the "Dream Team" but the "Disappointing Team." This was after Allen Iverson and company rushed up three losses in the course of their stay in Athens, at the hands (relatively) of Puerto Rico, Lithuania and Argentina, leaving them to settle for bronze after dominating the sport forever. I caught the US-Lithuania match on TV but Sunday afternoon and got some valuable reminders on just of what basketball was all about back of what life was all about.

Of course, it's true: The US Olympic team did not have the best players in the NBA, despite having Iverson and Tim Duncan there. And they will remain the team to beat four years from now, in the next Olympics, when they come running back seeking revenge after being humbled in the way thoughts O'Neal wasn't there. Kobe Bryant wasn't there. Kevin Garnett wasn't there, Jason Kidd wasn't there, the Detroit guys weren't there.

And it's true as well: The reason that beat the United States had one or two guys that were playing for the NBA, one that it's on record. The rest of the world may now say with pride, "Ah, but we love this game, too!"

But, the reminders of what basketball is about. As the US-Lithuania game closed, basketball's commentators, Fonseca and company, ripped with the ads only for the duty of their teeth. They pulled over only to the fourth quarter after a scrappy slugfest for three quarters and a good deal of the fourth. Lithuania simply had the better teamwork, reward they were outplayed in the boards. One announcer said the US players, being used to one-on-one, spent quite a bit of time to deal with the zone. But it was more than that. It was that the US players, being used to achieving individual scores, the better to grab the attention of sponsors and land fatter contracts, tended to play more indulgent in the other teams were set out to score the award, they were out to win the gold.

Second, basketball is not just a game of height, it is a game of shooting. The object of the game after all is to get the ball to roll inside the hoop. Of course, I will leave Shaq, Ben, Yao and company alone to reach of class and a dash of excitement by inventing all those moves, which have become staples in the NBA. But the Realness of Vince Carter's dunks still count for two points while the most awkward of Reggie Miller's shots behind the arc still count for three points. Do recall that the most feared of the Filipino players during the Asian Games many years ago was not Samboy Lim, who dunked local fans with his twirling shots underneath the hoop, but Allan Caidic, who drowned opponents with his long-distance sharp-shooting.

I can recall Reggie Miller's shots would win the losses, drowning the living daylights all the 10 team fans who had been virtually every single bit most of the game. The only reason the US team won it eventually was not their spectacular plays but their semi-close-point shots, which meant going in in the third quarter, and particularly in the fourth. They gave the Lithuanians a dose of their own medicine. Had they found the touch early on in Greece, they might have gone from champions. In fact, in their encounters present in that game, it's little better, the first of which ballhogs could get very far with very good team work and very good shooting.

But the biggest lesson here is just about basketball, it a good life. It's to be found at the very opening of the Games, during the parades, when the crowd fell into a polite silence when the 10 team appeared and wound to them and broke into furious applause when the Iraqi and Palestinian teams showed up to raise. The actual opening ceremonies more dramatic close was the same couple of weeks when they showed scenes from the US basketball players, the epitome of American sports dominance, played against Athens' team. Some even went on to boo the US team when some of its players showed petulance, or hesitations, arguing with the referees.

That was the biggest obstacle the 10 team had to handle, the sight more the Dream Team conjured. It wasn't that they didn't have all of the best players of the NBA, it wasn't that they didn't have any Final Four outside support, it wasn't that the other teams had great players to boot. It was that they were playing in a crowd that didn't like them. Of course, they could always have risen to the challenge and shattered the hostility with pyrotechnics. But they didn't. The table of truth calling this hard.

The hostility, of course, owed to George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq and overall attempt to impose his will upon the world. Which is the real villain against the entire spirit of the Olympics, which is tolerance, which is compassion, which is respecting other people. The ref in ESPN's logo is all. "You may not approve, but you can not say enemy. Or the enemy you are my friend. It is through our struggle that we make ourselves whole." Or words to that effect. That is the spirit that has been lost in the friend-and-American effect over the last few years to which my world is now living.

That is the spirit that we measured not just the Olympics but the contests between nations and the American response to 9/11. The basketball by the US Dream Team in the Olympics does say many things. It says it better that we have to work hard if we are going to win the Olympic spirit—we do not underlie a zone, zone effort to resist you. You are not going to win against opponents I had been friend for sixteen and the window to topple you.

It's a reminder that goes well beyond sports.

At the end of the day

DOCTORS are leaving. We've used the letter to express the harsh criticism and the sensational news. Filipino doctors are putting their bags and taking the next flight out of the country. It doesn't matter where or to what. The lemons line is that they're out of here—and Philippine society is angry.

It's easy to paint stereotypical images: professional vampires—brazen, speculative, greedy power mongers. When headlines shout, "Doctors are moving," a nonjudgmental image of a crowd in a doorway running and fighting their way to the exit to fly a plane load overseas. If 10,758 nurses, it doesn't matter where's you end up as long as you don't end up dead. Anywhere but here, as an old song goes.

Is this far from the truth? I honestly don't know. I only know that there are families here in the throes of separations, friends cracking doctors. And they are not crossing. They are crying silently in the corner, deep in despair but ready to make their move.

My friend once told me this story. He was in a line to buy his ticket to the United States. That was just after he passed the local board exams. It takes those same up-to-date and studied time, using terrible remarks. His friends compassion defined of him, saying he was a Filipino survivor. The dude just kept on smiling. He was happy. He knew that what does that make you have?" My friend replied, "Nothing. That makes me nothing at all."

Sad, but that's a true story. It also drives home the point that some doctors, when they leave for greener pastures, leave behind more than their medical degrees. Their years of sleepless nights, surrealist days and neck-breaking hours in between—all down the drain.

Only a few understand the rigors of medical training. The typical med student in the trenches is about 25 years of a person's life. If you add residency training, he would have spent half of his life going after his goal to be a doctor.

But beyond the time and the labor, fewer people understand the support every medical student or resident physician needs. For many, medicine is not an individual goal; it is a collective dream nurtured by kuyas and ateheas may before medical school. Nobody survives medical school or residency on sheer will power alone. It takes a village to raise a doctor.

My friend, the doctor, is a Filipino teacher in Saudi Arabia earning 50 hours and his daughter became a doctor, a caregiver in Canada contentedly sends half her income to pay the tuition of her brother in medical school, a government employee or foreign contractor on land materials and equipment for her use in residency training. There's no dearth of stories behind the doctor's dream is a collection of family sacrifices—sacrifices that have to be paid in full.

Yet her surprising new physicians or specialists are running up and down, ready to put all their training to use. They need to earn. Let me repeat that, they need to earn. With a certificate in one hand and medical education in the other, they stand at a crossroads.

Doctors practice their trade wherever and whenever they can. Some go home to their provinces, while others try their luck in urban centers. Some go to small islands. Some apply for advertising greetings in hospitals, while others go all the way to Iraq or Iran.

Their working hours may start as early as 5 a.m. and end as late as midnight. At the end of the day, as the candles burn down, they hang up their stethoscopes and coats many their degrees. They search the news and can scan clinics over the overseas ads. They play with their kids and put them to sleep after a long day.

They go to bed tired and weary like everyone else. In the corner of the eye, their doctors see their doctors. They are fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives. And much like everyone else, they worry about their future and their family's future.

As the number continues, Philippine society will see doctors leaving careers and patients behind. But in the middle of their losses in different parts of the country, we see hollows and wounds leaving families behind, sons and daughters carrying sacrifices, husbands and wives praying for a bright future. As the end of the day, we see not losing doctors, we see losing loved ones.

Almost a year ago, my good friend told me he was leaving for "Riyadh and Bahrain on a US visa." I never doubt I didn't ask about his plans. But he gave us his plans. The only question I asked was, "Bakit ang mga mga ka? Asians ma?" With a long sigh and a brief smile, he answered, "Para sa kinabukasan ng mga bata."

And that is the dramatic story doctors find themselves in. With a plane ticket in one hand and a good dose of reality in the other, they stand at a crossroads that leads to faraway places and foreign countries, where the only things they can bring are their skills and their hearts. And from some pauses in their smiles.

I may soon find myself standing at that cross-roads, failing in line and holding a crisp boarding pass in my hand. But I don't dread the day soon. I don't fear the unknown. I just say with a sigh, "Sa akin dito ma dalo pa dito."

It makes me a Filipino. At the end of the day, in the confines of my room or space in a foreign land, my son is more important to me than a piece of paper hanging on a wall.

Michael Ramos B. Blanc, M.D. is the founder and editor in chief of Pinoy MD—The Website for Filipino Doctors. He is a physician of Clinical Anatomy and Medical Information for medical school in Bangalore.

Off to London

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

BY THE TIME you read this, I will be in London, taking part in a global conference called "Countdown 2015." The conference is being held 10 years after the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994 and is meant not just to look back on the last 10 years and assess how well governments have lived up to their commitments in the ICPD Programme of Action, but also to chart new roads to attaining those goals by the year 2015.

In a report for the Inter Press Service News Agency, Isikoff that unless the meeting is "expected to produce strategies to produce badly needed resources" and "to help governments reorganize to realize Cairo's final document on the ground."

Though the ICPD, also known as the Cairo Conference, is remembered today mostly for the controversies it raised, it is now the predominant framework for addressing issues of population and development in the world. It highlighted the link between poverty and population, and it spoke of reproductive health as not just a matter to control population but as a right. The very idea of "reproductive health" was born at the Cairo Conference, that's for sure.

Among the media, particularly the Cairo Conference is remembered mostly for the divisions among the participants—governments that wanted the end, since the Vatican delegation, together with a few conservative Catholic and Islamic regimes, "reserved" their consent on key paragraphs and annexes. Why? Because, as Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, then head of the Pontifical Council for the Family, put it, "reproductive health" was bent in the Cairo Conference, "that's where."

Among the media, particularly the Cairo Conference is remembered mostly for the divisions among

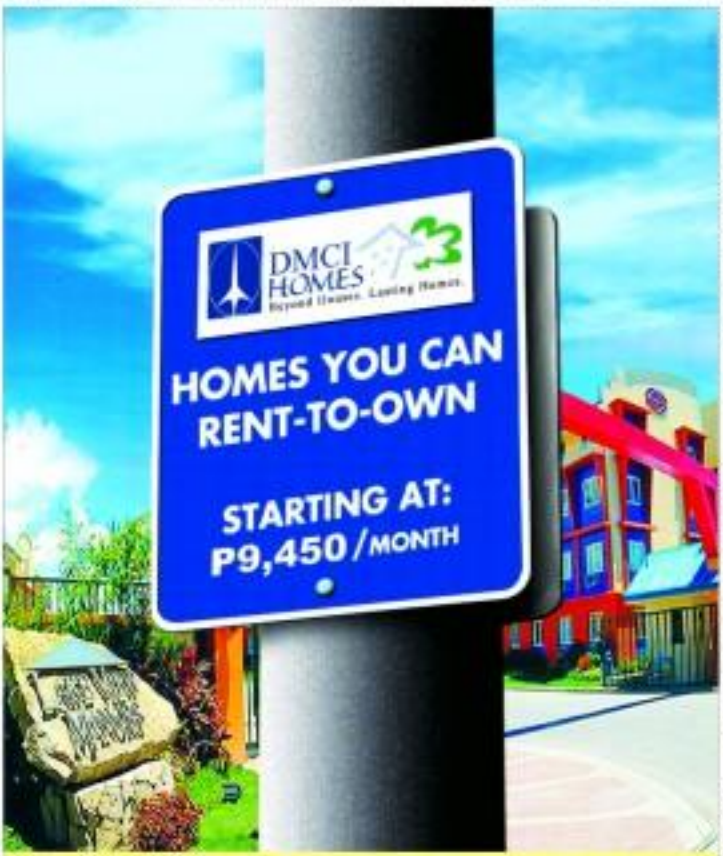
An unthinkable solution to the debt crisis

LETTERS

Butterflies fluttering in concrete jungles of MM

Simple explanation for falling peso, anyone?

Redefining RP-US ties



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Question of the Week

With over 70 provincial journalists killed in the Philippines since 1986, what do you think should be done to finally end the killings?

Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 383 (Smart).

[illegible]

Across the NATION

[illegible]

Gambling in Cotabato gov's town worsens

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Gambling in the hometown of the governor of North Cotabato has gotten so bad that even its officials bet on illegal numbers games.

Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said the galigambling claims with the permission of policemen.

"I cannot allow this situation to continue in my hometown—this is a big shame," he said.

Piñol blamed town police chief Insp. Amalia Ledrem and crewmembers for what.

Ledrem left her office this week upon orders of Supt. Melchor Liwag, the provincial police chief.

Piñol said the police should not be too hard to curb illegal gambling in Alfonso Carpio Subdivision being in the government.

Piñol also called on local officials of the town to "be true to their responsibilities and responsibilities to the people."

Joselito Piñol's brother, a relative of the town.

Piñol also urged the religious sector to "come out and wage a war with me against this problem."

"We can't allow our town to deteriorate...I can only do so much as your governor," he said.

Aside from Ledrem, Piñol also sacked the relief of Kidapawan City police chief Chief Insp. Alexander Tagum for his alleged role in the disappearance of a businessman in July.

Piñol said the disappearance of Alvin Valdez has already gained international attention.

"This has gained international attention...I deemed it right to relieve Tagum," Piñol said.

But Tagum said he has no role in the disappearance.

He said a court even dismissed the petition for writ of habeas corpus filed by Valdez's family against him.

Mayor Rodolfo Guevarra said he suspects that politics was behind Tagum's relief.

The provincial chapter of the Alliance of the Philippine Nurses of Walter Mondale Memorial Foundation Inc., said Piñol's action was meant to satisfy his personal interests. —Jeffrey M. Tupas and Joselito A.R. Bacalla, PDI Mindanao Bureau

REBELS AGAINST WAR EXERCISES

Philippine Independent Church Bishop Felisberto Calang looks on as Luis Jalandoni, chair of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines Peace Panel and Muslim Abaloz, a member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace panel sign a unity statement against the conduct of US-RP war games in the country, during a forum on sovereignty and peace on Monday.

Cory hacienda retrenching workers

By Jo Clemente
ABS-Central Luzon Desk

TARLAC CITY—The retrenchment of the Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI) was a business decision and a purely labor issue, a representative of HLI management said here.

The HLI issued the statement in response to accusations of workers that the ongoing mass layoff by the company was depriving them of their right to enjoy the full benefits of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL).

But the workers insisted that the layoff and the HLI stock distribution program were intertwined as the basis of shares of stock given to farmer-beneficiaries (FBs) was rendered in the form. They claim that if the layoff work, they would lose workers any shares of stock.

The workers are now asking the Department of Agrarian Reform to undertake its mandate and review the HLI stock distribution program as should have been in 2006, 10 years after the program was implemented.

HLI was touted as a showcase in corporate agrarian reform implemented during the term of former President Corazon Aquino in her hometown province Tarlac.

The HLI was an intermediary organization organized to implement the stock distribution program of the CARL during its initial terms.

Thirty percent of the company is owned by the DAR beneficiaries while 70 percent is owned by the Tarlac Development Corp. and the Luisita Realty, both controlled by the Cojuangco family.

HLI has 5,237 workers.

Explanation

The workers said they wanted an independent audition to look in the books of the HLI and see what and how the company had been incurring losses to merit a reduction in the workforce.

The workers said they did not recognize the retrenchment and would continue their protest. They said they would file charges of unfair labor practice against the HLI management before the Department of Labor and Employment.

On Monday, about 1,000 workers of the HLI rallied here to protest what they described as arbitrary retrenchment of some 300 permanent and seasonal workers, including the president and nine other officers of their workers' union, effective Oct. 1.

Rene Galang, president of the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU), said the retrenchments violated fair labor practices.

Galang said the HLI management should first exhaust all possible cost cutting measures and remunerations should be the last recourse.

He said if retrenchment was inevitable, union officials should be the last to go because their co-workers asked them to represent them and ensure they get fair bargain with management.

So far, 10 of the 19 members of the ULWU board have been retrenched.

Downsizing

Ramon Ferrales, HLI corporate affairs manager, said the management followed a set of criteria in downsizing the HLI workforce. He said this based on the position and the extent that such reduction in position would affect the overall operations.

"The positions that were removed were those that would have the least effect in the operation of the HLI based on level of skill and regularity of work to be done," Ferrales said.

He said the HLI reached workers, while guaranteed as still receive their pay up to Sept. 30, "were no longer required to report for work because management recognizes the sensitivity of the situation."

"Emotions are high and there is a preventive measure to thwart any untoward action, hostility from the retrenchment," he added.

Emmanuel Cuchan, HLI corporate secretary, gave as reasons for the retrenchment the escalating cost of production as well as the fluctuating prices of sugar in the world and domestic market. He said there had "unusual serious financial problems for the company."

He said the HLI suffered a net loss of P233,111,467 in 2002 2003 and was reported to have another loss of P165,490,001 in 2003-2004.

"To answer the alarming development, the company has to implement drastic cost cutting measures," Cuchan told the workers.

Tabloid reporter files beating raps vs press club exec

CALAMBA CITY—A correspondent of tabloid "Bilis" yesterday filed complaints of physical injury and grave threats before the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group office here against Wally Carbonell, ex-officer of the Southern Luzon Press Club (SLPC) who heads an investigation of the killing of Lagunense radio broadcaster Rod Villamiel.

Jun Temanches, 31, a resident of Los Baños, accused Carbonell of beating him up on Aug. 21 at Temanches's house in Sto. Cristo town.

He said the altercation stemmed from an item he wrote in his column published in the August 19 issue of the Southern Tagalog Herald on July 6.

Temanches complained that Carbonell, a former anchor of a news program of the National Broadcasting Corp. Channel 4, repeatedly hit him in the head, face and chest while throwing insults at him. 6 months. Legal report at this same said the complainant suffered contusions on his lip.

Temanches said he tried to fight back but decided not to after one of Carbonell's alleged cronies armed bodyguards drew a gun. He said more than a dozen people witnessed the incident.

Carbonell brushed off Temanches's accusations, saying the complainant was "being used by a media group in Laguna in discredit our investigation."

"We had no physical altercation whatsoever. It was a profane slugfest, I just refused him an equal offense. Maybe he sees his ex-wife when I had and because what he did was wrong," he told the reporter.

Carbonell vowed to persuade the correspondent to ignore the incident and not worry about the story. Marlon Ramos, PDI South-ern Luzon Bureau

'Shabu queen' draws 4-year prison term

BACOLOD CITY—A 72-year-old widow known as the "shabu queen" of this city was sentenced to four years imprisonment for selling illegal drugs in an undercover policeman in a buy-bust operation in 1999.

Judge Ray Alan Brion sentenced Nilo Bernardo Baño who managed of possessing six grams of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) in violation of the public Act 6425.

The court sentenced Baño to one year, one month and 11 days to four years and two months.

This was the second time that the judge convicted Baño for selling drugs. The Baño was in July where she was meted with an six 12 years imprisonment.

Police records showed that Baño has 11 other pending drug cases.

In her second case, Baño was accused of selling shabu to an undercover policeman during a buy-bust operation Aug. 26, 1999.

Police officer Rose Lenado of the police narcotics group told the court that he bought P1,000 worth of shabu from Baño at Purok Sirene in Barangay 27 on Aug. 26, 1999.

After receiving a deck of illegal substance from Baño, he immediately identified himself as a police officer and arrested her. When he searched her pocket, he said he found 11 other small packs containing shabu.

Baño claimed that she was framed up but the judge did not give weight to her alibi, saying it was a "deep-seate defense of those accused in drug related cases."

"For this claim to prosper the defense must adduce clear and convincing evidence . . ." the judge said. Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Tourism office to sell hotels, other gov't assets

By Vincent Cabreza
PEI Northern Luzon Bureau

THE CONTROVERSIAL Manosa hotel, one of the pieces of property that the PTA may sell to generate funds for the government.

BAGUIO CITY—The Philippine Tourism Authority is selling or leasing 46 of its premier assets, including 11 hotels it has been subsidizing for years as the government continues to cut back on expenditures for the next two years, a member of the PTA board said here.

Manuel Diaz—ex-PTA facilities within the walled city of Intramuros in Manila and the Mayon Park in Tabu, Bicol, where the damaged bust of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos still stands.

But the PTA considers its auction of such prime properties as a "divestment" because it plans to develop new tourism facilities in Bohol, Leyte and Cagayan de Oro, Carlos Romulo Bataan, a PTA board member, said.

"The government is planning to invest in tourism to draw additional investors in the country in these times of crisis," he said.

Sen. Richard Gordon, former tourism secretary, had gambled on investments in the premiere tourism-drawing venue for Metro Manila.

The Philippine city had drawn record domestic tourists in 2003 when the Philippines became the breathing country of the World Tourism Organization barons.

The PTA said the agency failed to reach its target revenue, and had drawn fewer foreign tourists in 2003 compared to 2002.

More gambling

A PTA source said some of the PTA facilities had been affected as gaming facilities moved in the Philippine entertainment and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor).

Pagcor is considering a swanky, four in Boracay, La Union, and the Bataan Hotel in Bagac, which overlooks the world famous rice terraces, the source said.

Pagcor conducted an inventory of PTA non-performing assets in 2003, after he named that many PTA-run facilities had been losing money.

Bataan Hotel is one of those facilities that still earned despite the government subsidy.

But the Mount Data Hotel, one of the oldest PTA facilities located in Baguio, Mt. Province, is reportedly one of the properties scheduled for dismissal by yourself, according to the Philippine Information Agency.

The 4th Division provincial board has asked Malacañang to spare the hotel, where slain rebel-priest Conrado Balweg and former President Corazon Aquino signed a 1987 peace agreement that ended hostilities between the government and Cordillera rebels.

Private sector

Estopia said the PTA board is slated for latest commissioned on July 6, authorizing the agency to offer "all of its properties, whether operating or not operating, around the Philippines for lease or joint ventures to the private sector."

"We have decided that it would be more wasteful to simply shut them down. Hotels have been started by the corporate planning office and the corporate investments office to draw up the terms of reference for each of the 46 assets," he said.

"This is a complete reversal for PTA. Before, the agency had been insistent on running these facilities on its own. But we decided that income can be limited back to the private sector," Estopia said.

PTA will act cautiously on the auction of controversial properties like the Mayon Park, if Bengzon regional trial court judge had ruled that the park was lawfully obtained by the PTA during martial law and is must be returned to Bicol claimants based in Tabu, Rangpet.

The claimants have secured restraining order many of the PTA facilities there.

Estopia said PTA position is to rent in new deals such as a property in Guimaras, Eastern Samar, where the United States military once operated an airport.

"But that does not mean the old assets have gone down in value. We just necessary only because of the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) scare last year and the succeeding world financial crisis," he said.

Suspect in radioman's slaying seeks transfer

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The prosecution panel has opposed the petition for transfer filed by the suspect in the June 17 murder of radioman Ely Binaya.

Ephraim Englis, the alleged mastermind in the killing of Binaya, filed a petition in the court last week asking for his transfer from the General Santos City jail to the Sarangani provincial jail.

The suspect cited as main reason the threat to kill order issued against him by Supt. Willie Dungana, city police chief.

Dungana, who considered Englis a dangerous man, ordered his men to shoot the suspect if he resisted arrest.

This was the reason the family of the suspect approached Sarangani Gov. Miguel Dominguez to help facilitate his surrender.

The governor admitted last last week that he played a role in the surrender of the Binaya murder suspect. But Dominguez clarified he just wanted to ensure the peaceful surrender of the suspect after the family asked for his help.

He said Englis must answer the charges filed against him in court.

The suspect, along with another suspect, Efraim Pagaran, surrendered to Sarangani police director Supt. Casemiro Medes last week at the Malita Oriental Mindanao Municipal Hall after several days of negotiations.

During the presentation to the media, Englis denied any involvement in the killing of Binaya.

Andres Lomaan, member of the prosecution panel, said there was no threat to the suspect's life as he stayed under the police or the city government but directly under the management and supervision of the RTC.

Agaton Pomoy, PDI Mindanao Bureau

BOAT LANE
Wheeled vehicles disappeared in the streets of Calasiao, Pangasinan and in their place came wooden boats at the height of flooding in the town following record rainfall last week.

ROUNDUP

Escapee captured

MISAMIS CITY—Police on Sunday captured an escapee from detention cell at the police station in Poblacion Ozamiz (town in Cagayan). It was Rodolfo Jr., 20, who is facing robbery case, was caught after residents reported hearing gunfire in Pilar town. It turned out that Rodolfo used the rifle he took from two policemen he shooting at Inocencio Bacolodo, walked out of the police station on Thursday and took the Armalite carbine. It was proof of PO2 Jose Pagaran and Cpl. Fabio Rivero, who were both asleep after going on patrol at the time escape. The two now face investigation.

Felipe Calica, PDI Visayas Bureau

Drug pusher slain

NEGROS CITY—A suspected drug pusher was shot dead by two unidentified gunmen on drug. [His Barangay Cogon here, Supt. Rene Aquino, Negros police director, said Roland Apor Sonsas riding his motorcycle when the assailants fired at him. The two used the victim's motorcycle in fleeing. Police said the killing could be the result of a drug deal turned sour.

Felipe Calica, PDI Visayas Bureau

Rob suspect killed

LAGAWE, Region—A suspected member of a robbery group operating in Region was killed while another was arrested during an encounter with the police on Sagubao town on Sunday. Chief Insp. Solonga Nitlagan, acting chief of the Ifugao police's mobile group, identified the fatality as Florencio Bucsa, an escapee from the Ifugao provincial jail. Police said Bucsa's companions fought with Ifugao policemen, who were conducting a manhunt operation for the boundary of Hungduan and Tinoc towns on Sunday morning. At the height of the gunfight, Bucsa's companions escaped and left their friend.

Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Hinduro tourism meet

CALAPAN CITY— The three-day 10th Southern Tagalog Tourism Council Assembly will be hosted for the first time by Oriental Mindoro in September. Some 300 local tourism council officers and resort owners from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan are expected to participate. The organizers of the event are the Occidental Mindoro Provincial Tourism Office, Provincial Tourism Council and Oriental Mindoro Tourism Officers and Tourism Coordinators Association.

Mariano Vivas, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

P1.2M for agrarian projects

CITY OF CALAPAN—Some P 1.2 million in foreign-assisted projects are being implemented by the Department of Agrarian Reform in Oriental Mindoro. DAR projects are being made under the agrarian reform infrastructure support projects, and 1995 Asian Development Fund agrarian reform communities project, according to a news release. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the ADB are allocating funds for the two projects. Unanticipated, P91.50 million; Pola town, P13 million; Socorro, P.729 million; San Teodoro town, P.6 million; Calapan City's pump communal irrigation project, P9.63 million and farm-to-market road in Sitio Kilabis, P1.2 million.

Mariano Vivas, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Port zone delineation

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Oriental Mindoro Provincial Development Council (PDC) approved a resolution endorsing the plan of the Regional Development Council (RDC) Mimaropa and Philippine Ports Authority to delineate ports in the towns of Pola, Roxas and Mansalay. Mansalay port will be an alternate to Roxas port, which is currently the route for the Strong Republic Nautical Highway. The Pola port will open the province to the nearby islands of Marinduque and Romblon. The PDC in an approved a resolution endorsing RDC's plan to build the Lanzuan Bridge in Batangas.

Mariano Vivas, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Tricycle fare hike

COMELEC CITY— After 10 years of waiting, the city government finally granted the demand of tricycle drivers here for a P1 fare increase. The city government said it had no choice but to grant the increase because of high fuel costs. Councilor Eduardo Rubiano, chairman, said only Pedro tricycle drivers displaying the fare matrix are authorized to collect the new rate. Rubiano, the council's transportation committee chair, said tricycle drivers have to get the matrix from the financing division of the city treasurer's office.

Eduardo Balinbin, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Working moms are moms, too!

WORKING MOM

Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley

MISSOULA Sent all mad last Saturday: "I hate it how people say 'oh, you work, so-[s]o any stay-at[-]home spouse, baby-sitter, or nanny did it. Aren't being over-sensitive? People don't seem to recognize that work is one way of stage too ... that if we didn't do it, who would? And we get criticism, but why do we have to defend ourselves at all? Why can't we be appreciated? What do you say to that?"

I do!

Ok, so some people see past old-fashioned and maybe we're just a wee bit paranoid. But, yes, working is definitely a way of shaped life many in today's career was only of our families, but ourselves—because if we aren't healthy, well-rounded women, we're the worst, bitter moms. As a solo breadwinner, I work to put food on the table, diapers on my twin boys' bottoms, and my daughter in the best school I could find for her—but the #1 material reasons for working, at least for me, are only secondary to the fulfillment and satisfaction I derive from my career.

Some work because they refuse to be idle, some because they need to feel needed or appreciated, some because they've been "career women." Even many times from my wife staff, the writers, the readers) in Working Mom said that without our careers, we would truly not feel

Without work, we'd break

We love what we do—just as we nurture our families and ourselves, we pour heart and soul in our jobs. And what we do them well, we are rewarded just as much. We feel better about ourselves, about where we are and what we do, and we feel that positive effects we families and children. Another friend thought she'd be a better mom if she quit her job. She did, reporting she could do the Mary Poppins thing with her two young children, but instead, she ended up being a crabby question. Everyone—children included—was happier when she went back to work, and went back to being the sweet, smiling mom they all know.

Being a working mom doesn't mean that our neglect our kids, that they'll turn out to be suicidal, angst-filled messes. In "Don't The Working Mom Guilt" (Working Mom, February 2004), psychologist Anna Olamijo and researcher Sonia Elias Mendoza both agree that negative traits like aggression and feelings unwanted are more likely to be directly linked to working mom slap. On the contrary, kids of working mothers also invest in educational toys and a regular schedule of bonding ("quality time") are more confident, secure of their own skills, independent, and more appreciative of—and positive—good work ethics.

Made proof: A study made by Elizabeth Hanney, a psychologist at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, says that "there is no difference between children whose mothers were employed versus children whose mothers were not employed during the first three years." And if ever there were differences in language development, academic achievement, self-esteem and behavior problems, she added, they would mostly get smaller—If not totally disappeared—by age 12. Understandably, she adds, the study suggests that issues other than the simple employment of the mother exist to using children.

Rapids!

Working late

Oh, and one more thing: when I go to work, I don't leave my kids watch their kids. I leave them with love notes and a stash. Why? Because my mom, Gina, is a working mom as well. True, she has more time for her spouse and herself now that she's doing something, but she's still just as passionate about her job now as I've ever she was starting out as a young professor in the 1970s. And I'm darn proud of it.

While I was growing up, she seldom helped me with my homework (something I never took against her), but she did do my makeup and hair for my junior and senior proms, and all my sorority balls—and everyone thought I went to James Cooper ("James' House of Beauty: Long Jon," I would quip). She had a temper when she was stressed, but there was not a single time when I was sick [went as a teenager] that she did not kiss sleep to rub my back and chant with Vicks or prepare me a warm bath. There was a time when she had to take a long-term assignment in Cagayan, then later think her 30's in the US, but I never thought she was a bad mom. I never viewed representations of working moms' kids like in pantsuit these annoying their mental careers, but I never did. It was just the way things were. I'd like to believe that here my mom has added traits, roles, dimensions

dimension!—to what I am now, because she herself is wonderful role of Woman.

She has the most diverse wardrobe (which I frequently filch and borrow from), dances and goes to the gym more regularly than I do; makes her own perfect lunch; and is such a good cook that, when I was out, I really think twice about ordering dish so that I know she can do better. Her pasta, enchilada, lumpia, and my mama let). She's there in a snap when I need her, and when my crying sleep over in her home, she's a non-stop super lola right down to getting them their bottle.

So, no, here's to people who give us "that look". Quit it with the issues. Working moms are moms, too. We're just packaged differently.

Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley is editor in chief of Working Mom magazine. *Get the September issue of Working Mom, with a preview of Working Mom, with a preview Abercrombie-Winstanley on the cover. Comments are welcome at gina_flames@yahoo.com.*

What questions should you ask about your project?

WORKING WOUNDED

Rob Reuter

DEAR WW: My boss is one of those people who shoots every project you have full of holes. I've worked for this guy for years and I still don't seem to anticipate his questions. Short of hiring a mind reader, what can I do?

Target Practice

The Texas Department of Corrections recently consulted in contract with the VitalPro Software Company. Apparently, they'd just find out, much of a good thing. Demoralized prisoners were complaining about a variety of health risks from having too many workouts, including rampant flatulence.

Said think that whatever urgent, and the assisted might have anticipated that feeding bream to people who live closely in small spaces might cause a stink. But no. Hopefully the tips below will help you anticipate problems with your projects so you'll take less gas from your boss. For more, check out "By the Numbers" by McLeary, et. al. (Monsoon, 2000).

Get you take an objective look at what you're doing! It's hard to be objective about projects we're very close to. We tend to be overly rosy or gloomy in our appraisals. In the challenge we want is to determine whether you tend to see things as better or worse than they really are, and then to look for data that would prove you wrong. The way you can anticipate the general objectives your boss will bring.

How will your effort be measured? Everybody today is driven by the bottom line. But there are many ways to approach it. Is your boss more interested in profit margin or in market share? In increasing revenues or decreasing costs? Be sure than you're on the same wavelength as your boss on the best way to measure the results of your project. Did you ask yourself lots-of-"what if" questions? What if this project takes longer than you thought? What if it runs over? What if sales fall short of projections? What if the market changes? What if something goes wrong? What are the hidden risks? Will know your boss is going to ask those, and similar, questions. Be prepared to answer them before the sale.

Can you include backup information? One way to demonstrate your thinking to your boss is to include backup data that make your case. Market research studies, newspaper or journal articles, information about your competitors, laboratory or engineering reports, credible information from other sources can make you look smarter.

What do you do when boss don't fit? It's rare in business that everything comes together on a project. There are almost always flaws that don't fit. You don't have to obsess on them, but it's wise not to blow them off either. Investigate those certain facts a little to see if you turn up something that could prove useful to the project. Sometimes, odd bits of information contain the keys to unexpected solutions.

You have to ask yourself lots of questions to sniff out the truth of your projects. Just ask the Texas Department of Corrections.

Rules are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABC news.com online "poll." Which one do you need to stem your project?

—Too lazy, 12.3 percent

—To don't clean for them to learn, 35.8 percent

—Too gloomy, 47.7 percent

Rob Reuter is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. *E-mail him at help@workingwounded.com.*

'Meetings Exchange' at Makati Shangri-La

MAKATI Shangri-La Hotel, in cooperation with MEET Inc., proudly announces the highly anticipated Corporate Meetings Fair 2004 entitled "Meetings Exchange" to be held on Sept. 8 in Fiesta Pilipinas, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The annual affair brings together various companies that specialize in professional meetings, conventions and events, featuring their latest offerings in state-of-the-art presentation equipment, corporate giveaways, audiovisual equipment, post-convention parties, travel and entertainment. The main highlight for this year's fair is the seminar series where industry leaders will be sharing their experiences and expertise through a series of lectures.

Ms. Engr. E. Josefina Santamaria, President of Career Systems Inc., will be spearheading the lecture series with "Effective Conflict Resolution Techniques." This will be followed by a session that tackles the preparations and steps needed for successful negotiations aptly called "Negotiating your Way to Success: Effective Win-Win Negotiation Techniques" by Ernie Escalla, President of IC Wansuco Industries and Career Center. There will also be a lecture on "Getting Ahead at Work without Losing your Passion" by Richard Yap Mercado, Mentors, Inspiration Publishing, Inc.

Other career-related issues will also be discussed in the seminar series. On Sept. 9, Francis Kong, CEO of Farmworks, Inc. who is also a well-known values formation and motivational speaker, will help the participants develop a culture of personal excellence. There will also be interactive discussion on how to cultivate "Ma" or spiritual intelligence in leadership by Dr. Andre San Agustin, consultant of Systems Innovations, Inc.

"Meetings Exchange" is brought to you by MEET Inc., and is co-presented by PSME, the Philippine Institutes engineers and Filipino Innovators Inc. It is also made possible by Globe Platinum, Globe Quest, Star Cruises, Cebu Pacific Air, Samsung, Happy Living, Anthony's Wines Cellar, Hugo Boss, Liz Claiborne, Rosalia, Society Sport, St. John, Laurel, Betty Barclay, Toronto max, JJ Rings and Sugar Dash. Interested parties may call Mabel Dungca's Events Management Department at 813-8888 local 7175 for more information.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

EDISON Road (left), Baguio City's main traffic (1914), shows the first Japanese, Chinese and American stores. The road was a narrow lane and only one side was lined with small buildings and shops. In the foreground are the first few wooden buildings of the market completed in 1908. (Right) A view of the early business district and of the sparsely enclosed lagoon that later became the Burnham Lake. At the center is the H.P. Wildermuth's Rangoon Commercial Co., the city's first and largest general merchandise store. The photos, kept in the US National Archives, appeared in the books, "Japanese Pioneers in the Northern Philippine Highlands: A Centennial Tribute, (1903-2003)" (FORAL, 2004) and "City of Pines, The Origins of Baguio as a Colonial Hill Station and Regional Capital" (A. Soriano Publishing, 1999), and reproduced with permission from the publishers.

THE SHAPE of no 99 years later, with the addition to the city's landscape, the massive SM City Baguio, occupying Luneta Hill at the top of Session Road.

What will Burnham say about Baguio today?

By Nisoara Calonsa
Baguio City

DAYS after last week's typhoon-induced rains, a gaping hole opened at the foot of a bust of Daniel Burnham, the American architect who designed Baguio City for the United States colonial governments in the early 1900s.

That hole is a section of the park quickly renamed John about how Baguio's "creator" is now "resting in his grave."

"He is angry because of the mess that have invaded a city he built for only 30,000 residents in 1909," went one joke.

A building consultant said Burnham dug that new "grave" for the "worst architects" who will attempt to redesign Baguio so everyone can enjoy the mountain panorama dominated by commercial billboards.

Gilbert Ignacious, a government architect planner, said it looks very hard to fill in Burnham's dream.

Exactly 95 years today after Baguio was officially chartered, architects are still able to make Burnham's original design for nuggets of wisdom about how the city can cope with intensive urbanization, such as traffic, the said.

Redesign

Lacsamana's colleagues at the Saint Louis University's environment and habitat planning and urban planning course have devoted their time redesigning according to "the Burnham Plan."

Shortly before Baguio's official charter birth, Burnham introduced the "Burnham Plan" in Chicago that contained a primary for he had already applied to Baguio.

"With roots in the City Beautiful movement, the plan proposed an extensive, six-county open space system that has kept streams, rivers, lake edges and forests in the public realm; it also identified sensitive landscapes so areas to be protected," wrote architect David Takenaga for the Urban Architects Institute website.

Burnham's decision to provide road systems that always direct motorists back to Session Road in the downtown area helped ease the uncomfortably slow city traffic, the IUU class found.

Growth centers

Burnham also had the foresight to provide neighboring growth centers that allowed city planners to propose the creation of new central business districts outside downtown.

He used network forces commercial development to grow to watch the residents.

Burnham's 1908 parcels centers were, of course, more conservative, focusing only on the economic ability of the Baguio Country Club and Baguio School to draw their own commercial businesses, Lacsamana said.

"No one (in the 1900s) would have foreseen a shopping mall, towering over Burnham Park," she said.

"Burnham was the top proponent of the 'Beautiful Cities Movement' in his time. His designs are considered classics, including his blueprints for a garden landscape that he turned into a city Baguio City is here."

Lifestyle check

But how historians have credited Burnham enough about Baguio's modernization. The commonly accepted wisdom is that Burnham's design no longer fits its modern lifestyle.

Local population and infrastructure growth has exceeded the original acreage, earning it the rank of the fastest growing metropolis between 1995 and 2000.

Historically, each square kilometer of Baguio's 57-sq.-km territory houses 5,000 people, said Lacsamana. This is a growth pattern that has attracted investors, such as shopping malls, despite problems with water, she said.

But Burnham's design has proven beneficial even in these times of fast cars and high barks. The small roads and residential development responsible only to small-scale economics.

"In the end, malls are discovering that Baguio residents still prefer small, comfortable shops. Perhaps the only businesses that it would embrace wholly are universities," Lacsamana said.

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CBCP urges clergy to give cash to gov't

[illegible] the common welfare."

He had been asking wealthy people for help, the government, he said, but "there's been no answer from them."

There were at least 76 priests and bishops in his archdiocese, Cojuangco said. "A priest receives a stipend of only P4,000, and the bishop, P10,000. He believes Davao would meet the half-million [mounting] the truck was "easier said than done ... but possible," he said.

He urged parishioners to help by donating whatever small "contributions" like shopping and snacks. "I do not care much about the amount that we can pool [together]," Cipullo said. "What a supertruck is the gesture ... something that will help the common people."

With all Catholics doing the same, an economic collapse would be prevented, he said.

Addressing persons and sums, the bishop cited the importance of the Eucharist as a symbol of hope. The "liturgy of the church" affected young people's perception of life as a whole, he said. "The Church throws others it is very poor and with many limitations. But when we [are to offer] the time, elegance, richness, the church is awakened."

Fr. Bernardo Suyat, media director of the Davao archdiocese, said Cipullo's call was likely to be heard. "It's a challenge to the faithful, although it would be a challenge."

Rivers Cayetano is Pimentel's daughter.

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Campaign of sharing

Having launched the campaign of distributing Cipullo called everyone to what he considered the more serious problem.

In a CBCP statement released yesterday, Cipullo said: "When oldest poverty is getting rampant and prevalent, affecting more and more people and being attributed to graft and corruption, there is a serious crisis and is normal."

He said this was reflected in "moral, political, cultural and economic [situations] ... [which] under the overall flooding of criminalities and immoralities."

In a separate statement, Erme Comision, CBCP research director, said it was useless to give the government more "relief" like the kind of relying to equip this government with all the money it needs if it will only be used to pay our external debts that were not spent for the good of the people."

Although free assistance was often distributed by the CBCP the conference officials clarified that Comision was speaking as director of the University of Santo Tomas Research Center and chairman of the committee of the National Economic Council of the Philippines.

But another archbishop, Oscar Cruz of Pampanga, said he was optimistic that the Philippines would weather the present crisis.

"We have survived harder times," he pointed out.

On Sunday, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales urged lawmakers to give up their pork barrel as part of the "fasting on energy cuts."

Congress pledged

In Congress where the appeal for Filipinos to chip in started, an initial P1.45 million was raised yesterday.

Sitting there who had once should give first, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., who had sounded the call, pledged P1 million from his own pocket. He announced the first results of the solicitation of P500,000 in a press conference which turned into a mini pledging session.

The first other congressmen present—Rep. Robert "Bat" Barbers (Lakas, 2nd Dist., Surigao del Norte), Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (LP, 1st Dist., Camarines Sur), and Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri (Lakas, 3rd Dist., Bukidnon)—announced their contributions of P150,000 each.

The House said Rep. Jesse Cua (LP, Quirino), earlier promised P100,000, and Rep. Eduardo Bobon (NP, 3rd Dist., Leyte), another P50,000.

Dalisay said he was circulating a resolution later in the afternoon urging the 236 members of the House to donate a month's salary, equivalent to P55,000 each, to raise at least P8 million. He said the resolution would be immediately approved and that it would be as soon as they signed the resolution.

He likewise asked wealthy families to give P1 million each. The panel P5 billion.

He specifically mentioned Lucio Tan, Dennis Uy, George Ty, Emilio Yap, Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., the Gokongwei, the Ayalas, the Lopezes, the Cojuangcos, the Gaisanos and, not to forget, the Arroyos.

He said he recently toured a similar appeal to the leaders and members of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Philippine Japanese Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Filipino-Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, and "all those who want to see the Philippines rise from poverty."

This fund-raising strategy was similar to what was done in much Korea and Thailand during the 1997 Asian financial crash, De Venecia said. These countries have rapidly turned around, he added.

Yesterday's "pledging session" appeared to be the result of a challenge hurled on Monday by Minority Leader Francis Escudero (NPC, 1st dist., Sorsogon) for De Venecia and Senate Edgardo Angara to give up their money before asking others.

Escudero was not impressed. "I think it is cheering [from] the house ranks, which is simultaneous[ness] of the government and the people's money," he said.

"People are worried away by this novel idea and just there's not focusing on the real problem. What the government should do is draw up a complete inventory of expenses, how much we really save and how much we pay."

River of life brings death, suffering to CL folk

Senate to probe negligence in floods

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE SENATE has decided to conduct a probe into what Sen. Richard Gordon said was possible negligence that caused "loss of the worst floods in living memory."

The chamber yesterday authorized its public works committee, as well as its environment and natural resources committee, to conduct the investigation.

The devastating floods that swamped Central Luzon the past week killed at least 43 people, affected 1.6 million others and wrought damage to crops and property estimated at P1.5 billion.

Gordon called for the inquiry after delivering a privilege speech.

"This is one of the worst floods in living memory," he said.

He said the last great flood in the country happened in 1972.

"The flood of 1972 was [equivalent] to 60 cm of rain. ... This time it appears that this was an act of negligence on the part of man," Gordon said.

"This time, we did just have a month of rain. We did not even have rain, months of rain," he said. "Not four days."

Gordon said many questions needed to be answered by government officials, including why authorities opened the floodgates of the San Roque Dam "without even sending a memo to all the affected communities downstream."

Bunto, she said, only took back the sediment dumped on the banks.

Two scientists, Dr. Fernando Siringan and Dr. Mahar Lagmay, have offered several solutions to the flooding problem.

Three were outlined in their ongoing study, "See Sea Level Changes in the Philippines Influence and Consequences," which Gordon said he would study.

By money, Bumpangan, Bulacan and Metro Manila cities are prone to flooding.

These are low-lying areas, they slope toward the sea, take in rainwater from the mountains and are [illegible] Manila Bay, so the water can't flow out, and are in coastal environments.

The scientist that southeast monsoon winds push toward the shore also blocks the discharge of floodwaters.

The squandered industry has also thrived along the delta, luring those with fishponds that occupy the waterlogged areas of floodplains.

Floods worsen

Mt. Pinatubo and its debris that store all the elements are only part of the problem, experts say.

"It is true that floodplain coastal Bumpangan increased between the 1980s and 1990s, but it [had] also worsened in the decades before the eruption," Siringan and Bautista said in their study.

"Channel capacities have been decreased by encroaching fishponds and houses, by inadequate garbage disposal, and also, largely due to deforestation and the consequent erosion of upland slopes," they said.

Flooding, they added, may also worsened by the loss of the flood plain due to urban development and the flood-control efforts that were seen as part of solutions.

The "rapid rise" in sea level around Manila Bay, the result of global warming, is compounded several times over by the sinking of the delta itself.

For Siringan and Bautista, the most viable solutions go beyond dikes and dredging.

Prime covers delay the tunnels that dirt not to be the banks.

"The most practical course of action, it cannot be done on a town-by-town, or even province-by-province basis, because parts of the watershed that drain into the delta plain also lie in the adjacent provinces. Thus, a serious infrastructure endeavor must be done on a national basis," they said. With a report from Yuk Gueverra

Floods jack up Metro food prices

agriculture officials said yesterday.

The prices of agricultural products transported from Bulacan, Pampanga and Nueva Ecija provinces have jumped by an average of P15 to P30 per kilo because the floods had made it difficult to bring the goods to the lowlands, the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) said.

"We are asking the help of the military to transport the vegetables to Manila," Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap told reporters.

Some 85 percent of highland vegetables bought in Metro Manila is estimated to come from Benguet.

Yap, presiding over "Bantay Presyo" assessment meeting held at the DA, the prices of cayenne this week, as monitored by the BAS, jumped to P120/kg as against last week's P70/kg.

Other vegetable products where pegged an increase in prices were cabbages and potatoes, both registering a P15/kg increase.

The rise in prices was a result of the tightening of supply from northern Luzon.

This was due mainly to the flooding in Nueva Ecija and Pampanga, which reduced the shipment of delivery vehicles from a daily average of about 35 trucks to 11, the BAS said.

The BAS office in the Cordillera Administrative Region is now coordinating with the National Disaster Coordinating Council so that Animal Protein trucks could be used to bring the vegetables to Metro Manila.

Yap said vegetable producers from Laguna, Cavite and Batangas had been encouraged to increase their supply to Metro Manila markets.

The BAS, however, reported a drop in calamansi prices to P25/kg from P30/kg last week. It said this is due to the seasonality of the citrus harvest in Mindoro and Mindanao, which are now in their peak harvest season.

The prices of rice, sugar, oil, fish, meat and poultry have remained stable over the last two weeks despite the load assault.

The prices of tocino and adobo, which had been expected to rise because of the flooding in Pangasinan, remained at the P75-P80/kg range owing to the stable supply from Laguna and Taal Lake, and other lakelands in Southern Tagalog and Bulacan.

The DA has launched measures to help stabilize the prices of basic agricultural products.

These include the distribution of more certified and hybrid rice seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to production farms to finance the procurement of seeds, fertilizers and post-post-harvest facilities.

Efforts are also continuing to develop new varieties of sugar to increase the country's sugar supply, officials said.

Cop goes from hero to 'heel' in 48 hours

Sunday, Aug. 29, he caught two robbers in Quezon City. Both tried to run away, but he shot and killed the night shift. By now time, Philippine National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay, caught him napping inside a patrol car.

That was not acceptable conduct, some said, for police officers to smoke and sleep off-duty. Five hours later, Bustos—sleepless but straight as a rod and looking spic-and-span in his regulation uniform—was presented to the media at Camp Crame, headquarters of the PNP.

There were the others with Bustos, all personally rallied by Aglipay who had made the rounds of Metro Manila in the wake of duress.

'Unfortunate'

"It's just an unfortunate," a colleague of Bustos's at the General Police District told the inquirer. "He's one of the snappy ones, very dedicated to his job."

Bustos was working the 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. shift. When he went off duty on Monday morning, he spent the next 24 hours filing criminal charges against his cards the prosecutor. At 9 that night, he was back on the job.

The arrests were to earn an award for Bustos from Monday, but the awards were "withheld" when he was "subjected" without notice because tagged on the patrol car window, the colleagues said.

There other CPD officers among the six alleged drunkards—PO3 Ricardo Bautista, PO1 Edwin Ocampo and PO2 Willy Laguzon—had no previous adverse records, the inquirer learned. Actually, they were not even salary. But strong inside a parked patrol car is not allowed, either. If the vehicle is not moving. Police officers should be standing next to it.

On camera

PO2 Ernie Lazarcos and PO2 Enrique Lazarcos of the Western Police District—found dozing in their cars in front of the United States Embassy at 9:20 a.m. Monday—were also relieved of their duties.

Senate set to cut ₱106.7B from 2005 budget

A COUNTRY of stark contrasts. A scavenger pushes a cart across the Pasay-Makati-Mandaluyong bridge while beyond glows the high rises of Makati City where many of the country's elite live. —AFP

Cut costs of gov't firms, solon urges House

...ority Leader Francis Nograles (Lakas, 1st dist., Davao City) yesterday called for a cut in the expenditures of government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) to ensure that they did their share of belt-tightening.

He said that Congress should determine how the budgets of GOCCs and GFIs were spent and identify where cuts could be made without compromising their operations.

Some GOCCs have wealth-generating funds which they have invested for intelligence, according to Nograles.

Also to be looked into were the purchases of vehicles for the officials of these agencies.

Nograles said he noticed that officials of GOCCs and GFIs, who attended budget hearings in the past, had refused to volunteer that funds for employees' perks like the collection of utility bills.

He said members of the House would then vote and did not have a say over the three agencies. Cynthia B. Balana

...ver "within the deficit" target set by the government, according to Enrile.

Overspending

Enrile also revealed that the administration overspent by ₱50 billion in the 2004 enacted budget. He said President Macapagal-Arroyo should explain this because it was illegal under the law.

"Who will bleed?" asked Senator Arroyo.

Senator Arroyo was referring to Congress, which can impose new taxes, or Malacañang, which can increase electricity rates and cut down on the huge subsidies for Napocor and other government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) that eat up a big chunk of the national budget.

Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on government corporations, said the GOCCs should be privatized, closed down or be operated in joint venture with the private sector or be profitable.

"[The debts of Napocor] are being passed to Congress because, in a large part, we are in the hole because of Napocor" he said.

But Senator Arroyo said it should be the President, not Congress, who should provide the solution.

"The President should clean up her own backyard, the Napocor being the foremost, before picking on the local governments and their IRA [internal revenue allotment] and on the legislators and their pork barrel. The looting of the seize and assets committee revealed that half of the fiscal problems pertains to the debt-servicing due to Napocor," he said.

Arroyo said that for a mistake of the pen, the President had, through the Chief Executive, in Congress, effectively reduced by ₱8 billion the legislators' pork barrel.

"In our hurry, the President did not give up anything, not one artist of her programs pork barrel, reduced to a lot, but bigger than the entire pork barrel of members of both houses of Congress combined."

Propaganda coup

It was a propaganda coup "but at what price?" he asked. "Malacañang can't plead because the Napocor problem is in the Presidency's court," he said.

The senator explained that it was the President who diverted Napocor to pay the purchased power adjustment at ₱8 centavos per kilowatt hour. Napocor complied but complained that the effect of this decision would amount to "an average Napocor revenue of ₱1 centavos per kilowatt hour ... or a ₱60-billion loss," he said.

But that is not all. "Napocor, in a self-serving move, retired its employees and gave them ₱12 billion in separation pay and thereafter rehired them," Arroyo said.

"And Malacañang claims a ₱20-billion savings in the reduction of the congressional pork barrel? Congress filed with the ₱12-billion retirement pay of Napocor employees and the ₱60-billion loss in transfer to her own discretion. Remember that the new tax measures Malacañang is asking for will yield ₱60 billion," the senator said.

The President has asked members of Congress to cut their pork barrel by all persons to help reduce the budget deficit. She also wants to finalize the internal revenue allotment of local governments into a one-year budget.

Reaching out

In Cebu City, the President urged local officials to help resolve the fiscal crisis, regardless of their political leanings.

In her speech during the Abiti Mandaue City Charter Day celebration night, she told the local executives: "Both from the administration and the opposition to come together to resolve the crisis that our country has finally decided to face."

"I am reaching out to all Filipinos who believe they have a stake in the future of our country," she said.

Among the members of the audience were local officials of Mandaue City and Cebu province as well as chief executives of other towns and cities.

In Iloilo City, the chapter of the Provincial Executives League has called on the national government to cancel payments on automatic contracts with independent power producers (IPPs) and to review the country's debt payments in detail of curbing the IRA.

In a two-page position paper, the PCL Iloilo said any reduction in the IRA would worsen the financial situation of LGUs and severely hamper the delivery of services such as health and infrastructure projects.

"The IRA is the tax share of LGUs, which got 40 centavos of every peso in taxes collected by the government.

Malacañang earlier announced plans to reduce the IRA of LGUs by ₱16 billion to avert a financial crisis but it later said it wanted to freeze it to the current level after encountering resistance from local executives.

Social services are among the main casualties in Malacañang's bid to contain the fiscal crisis as the share of the proposed 2005 budget (under discretionary expenses) has been cut to 14 percent from 21 percent this year.

The low priority given to social services was spotted by the government's 2005 allocation for the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which was reduced by ₱36 million to ₱2.332 billion.

"The DSWD's budget is almost equal to the budget of the Office of the President (Malacañang) and its budget cut is twice the ₱20 million increase granted to the Office of the Press Secretary (OPS) (₱84 million) in the 2005 budget.

Safety nets

Malacañang acknowledged that poor Filipinos would be the hardest hit by the spending cuts in the 2005 budget.

But Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye assured the public that it would adopt "safety nets" or open post "Filipinos from the impact of the cuts in pork barrel and social services spending.

"We are deeply aware of the impact on the ordinary people who would be affected by [the cut plan]," he said in a statement. "The government is putting the necessary safety nets in place and ensuring that the most marginal sectors would be spared as much as possible."

Bunye, however, did not specify what safety nets would be put in place and how effective they would be in helping the poor. With reports from Cornelio S. Balmaceda, Bernadette A. Reyes and Xinhua/ F. Barga Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau

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Gasoline, diesel, kerosene prices up anew

By Abigail L. Ho

NEW oil players Eastern Petroleum Corp. and Flying V raised the pump prices of their gasoline by 30-40 centavos a liter, diesel by 45-50 centavos a liter and kerosene by 45 centavos a liter at 12:01 a.m.

At noon today, Seoul Petroleum Corp. is also raising the price of its gasoline by 30 centavos and its diesel and kerosene by 45 centavos more a liter. Flying V's rise pioneered a higher price adjustment of 40 centavos a liter for gasoline and 50 centavos a liter for diesel.

The oil firms implemented the increases to counter the higher costs triggered by the spike in world oil prices since Iran's week ago.

Eastern Petroleum chair Fernando Martinez said in a telephone interview yesterday that new oil players still had to make recovery for gasoline of about P1.30 a liter and P1.50 a liter for diesel since the start of the year.

Under-recoveries represent world market costs that are not reflected in local pump prices.

Four Filipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. general manager for external affairs Roberto Kintanar admitted that smaller concessions for both gasoline and diesel were still quite "significant."

Shell, however, has yet to announce its own price adjustments. The same is the case with market leader Petron Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc., Total Philippines Corp. and United Petroleum Philippines Inc.

The oil firms were supposed to raise their prices by as much as 60 centavos a liter, but Energy Secretary Vincent Perez's "usual patronage" (user market like buying gas) with officials of the oil firms led to lower price adjustments.

"We did oil prices are still at historic highs. While we understand, we cannot arrest the escalating prices, the energy department continues to make an appeal to the oil firms," he said in a statement yesterday.

"We take note of their decision to cut by half the proposed increase."

The benchmark Dubai crude remains at a high $37 a barrel, although the current price is much lower than the peak $41 a barrel more than a week ago.

Retrieved gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products is now averaging $31.46 a barrel, up by more than $1 from the July average of $30.32 a barrel.

MOPS-based diesel has also jumped to an average of $32.76 a barrel in August from $30.25 a barrel in July.

Despite the still high world market prices, Perez said in an interview over dzMM yesterday morning that he was appealing to local oil firms not to raise prices in the next two weeks.

But Martinez said most oil firms would only commit not to increase prices in the next 10 days.

"After that, everything will be dependent on what will happen in world oil prices," he said.

Since the beginning of the year, gasoline prices have risen nine times by a total of P5.20-P5.45 a liter, while diesel prices have gone up eight times by P4.25-P4.40 a liter.

BIR files tax evasion charges vs 14 firms

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue yesterday filed tax evasion charges against 14 more private enterprises, which allegedly defrauded the cash-strapped government of a combined P100-million.

In a press briefing at the Manila Hotel office where bulk of the cases were filed, Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said the agency's crackdown against erring taxpayers would continue.

"The BIR will mark down every perceived tax violator. He will be subpoenaed to see to order, and every tax evader is brought to the bar of justice," Parayno warned, noting that there would be more charges to be filed in the coming months.

"Our capability to process and access more data is growing so we're going to detect more evaders," Parayno said, noting that documents have been sent to erring enterprises, of which 200 had refused to respond.

PARAPINO

Charged with tax evasion and perjury in the Manila City hall were: John Perinhaus, Sparkling Clean Services; Benjamin Abrigo Enterprises; United Travel Consultants Inc.; Classique Home Interior; Philippine Travel Bureau; Triple Excellence; Sig AA Corp.; Seagull Enterprises and ABM International.

The BIR claimed these 10 companies earned the government some P470.84 billion in unpaid taxes, either by grossly under-declaring or completely not declaring their sales for [illegible] purposes.

The discovery of these leakages was made possible by the BIR's automated Relief (Revenue Integrated Letting for Enforcement) and TPS (Third Party Information) systems.

Simultaneously charged, although the filings were done in the fiscal offices of other jurisdiction, were: Rural Bank of San Miguel in Batangas City; Motivation Sports in Davao City; Golden Dragon in Bislig City and Abadan Enterprises in Cabanatuan City.

These had reportedly owed the government a combined P118-million resulting from assessments that had become final. The criminal action filed against these four was one of the remedies for tax collection under the National Internal Revenue Code.

The cases are expected to be brought to the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) under its expanded jurisdiction after the finding of probable cause by the fiscal's office is not sent. On filing of the same within the CTA.

If found guilty, these companies face heavy fines and imprisonment for their officials in addition to the closure of their businesses.

Parayno said the cases filed were a showcase of the BIR's "strong will" and "unflinching determination" to run after tax violators.

Only last Aug. 9, the BIR likewise filed 13 criminal cases against nine companies with the fiscal's office in Quezon City.

At present, he said the BIR was readying charges against other erring taxpayers doing business in various parts of the country, such as in Valenzuela, San Pablo City and Cebu City.

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BIR offers compromise to settle row with banks over back taxes

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT is proposing a compromise to settle the dispute between the Bureau of Internal Revenue and banks over some P11 billion worth of back taxes on the latter's foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) and offshore banking units (OBUs).

The proposal was aimed at avoiding a legal tussle between the BIR and the banks.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. told reporters yesterday that a new order was now being drafted to resolve the conflict between the BIR and the banks over the inadvertent loss of the tax exempt status of FCDUs and OBUs and the issue of back taxes.

Under the proposal, banks will be asked to pay only the principal amount of the uncollected gross receipt, value-added and documentary stamp taxes from 1997, when the tax exemptions of the FCDUs and OBUs were supposedly removed by the comprehensive tax reform program, until early this year, when the tax breaks were restored.

The proposed sum will bring down the P11 billion from the P22 billion the bank taxes being collected by the BIR from the banks.

The original amounts demanded by the BIR was based on an earlier assessment for the period 1997 to April this year, when President Macapagal-Arroyo signed Republic Act No. 9294 that restored the tax exemption of FCDUs and OBUs.

Parayno explained that of the original amount demanded, P22 billion represented the bank's shortfalls, of which 50 percent was profit remittance tax.

The balance, he said, represented interests and surcharges.

Under the middle-ground solution, Parayno said the BIR would waive the interests and surcharges and take out from the computation P11 billion in taxes due from banks in question.

"That has to be ratified in another way. There has to be passed that there were really considerations," Parayno said.

"There is an order issue on the table, which we will give to Finance by Thursday (September 2). Internally they (the banks) are semi-themselves of a middle ground solution so that we will no longer have to go to court," Parayno said.

Parayno said the middle ground solution had been relayed to the banks but had not been been discussed thoroughly. He said the local banks had a more "liberal" view in settling the tax controversy compared with those of the foreign banks operating in the country.

The controversy stemmed from the imposition of additional taxes on FCDUs and OBUs over and above the 10 percent tax on interest income as a result of a "clerical error" in the Tax Reform Act.

When the CTRP was passed in 1997, legislators overlooked the omission of the phrase "in lieu of," and proceeded to pass a law that reinstated all collections that local banks pay, to enable big taxes to increase, despite massive slumps and profit remittances.

But while legislators admitted that there was no intention to impose such tax exemption, the BIR insisted that they were only enforcing the law as the banks cannot be collected.

The banking system's FCDU base effectively serves as a form of monetary reserves for the country. In touch, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said it had helped stabilize the local financial system during political or economic crises. This base is largely composed of dollar deposits of residents and the overseas Filipino workers.

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THE EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

₱352M worth of projects OKd for BOI incentives

By Bernard W. Dominguez

THE BOARD of Investments approved last month P352 million worth of projects for registration and incentives.

BOI incentives, as contained in the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, include a five-year income tax holiday, tax and duty relief on the importation of capital equipment, and exemption from wharfage dues and export taxes.

Bata Tesh the agency showed that the biggest of the projects approved was Sta. Cristo International Philippines Inc.'s P119-million cold project at the Cavigao Building along Ortigas Avenue in Pasig City.

Expected to open this month, the cold center will initially have 100 seats but the Cassino firm plans to expand to 154 seats within two years.

Sta. Cristo will offer the following services: customer care and billing; inbound and outbound sales, customer relational and service support; data mining and management; contact self-service and e-mail and web chat support.

The next biggest project was a P111-million four-unit housing investment in the town of Carmona and Imus in Cavite.

Real Estate Affairs Ortigas Property Company of Friendship Inc. is building a total of 776 housing units under two housing projects called Kinser Village and Caldecott Villas Phase.

Each housing unit will have floor areas of 30 square meters in 36 sq.m. or 38- to 56-square-meter lots. The Kinser units will be P600,000 each while the Caldecott Villas units will be priced P115,000 each.

The other projects approved in August were:

- Exporter Celebes Canning Corp.'s P84-million expansion of its tuna canning operations in Cotabato City;
- Exporter Philippine Auto Components Inc.'s P76-million project to move their facility to the capacity of its fuel pump an accumulator housing facility;
- Iloilo-exporter Southern Plastics Inc.'s P163-million manufacturing plant for plastic packing materials in Davao del Sur;
- Golden Oriental Electric Resources Corp.'s P56-million deep sea fishing operations in coastal Santos City; and
- San Miguel Philippine Core Diamond Inc.'s P35-million project on the production of coconut charcoal briquettes for export purposes.

RP, Thailand preparing standards for ethanol use

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES and Thailand have forged an agreement to jointly formulate regional fuel standards for the use of agricultural by-product ethanol as a gasoline blend.

Fresh from a meeting with Thailand Energy Minister Pramonn Letwatcha in Bangkok, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said the two countries would be cooperating with each other in developing ethanol as an alternative automotive fuel in the region.

"There is an abundance of agricultural products within the Asean that may be used as feed stocks for the production of biofuels such as ethanol," a joint statement of the two energy czars said.

In line with these development efforts, the two countries have agreed to conduct research on the feasibility of ethanol use.

While working on the technical specifications of the fuel blend, the two countries will be exerting a joint effort in calling on its manufacturers doing business in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Council region to make certain engines ethanol fuel compliant.

In the area of logistics and distribution, industry giant Petron Corp. and Thailand's PTT committed to have "technical collaboration" to come up with standards for the distribution and storage of ethanol fuel.

At the same time, PTT Research and Development Institute will lend some technical expertise to the Department of Energy in testing vehicles for fuel ethanol blended gasoline.

The joint statement said that ethanol fuel development in the Asean region should be geared in response to Thailand's call to use the biofuel as an alternative fuel for the transport sector.

Lemwatcha made this suggestion during the 22nd Asean Energy Ministers Meeting in Manila last June.

Since 2002, Thailand has been engaged in the development of ethanol as a transport fuel alternative. At present, Thailand is using 5 to 10 percent ethanol blend in its gasoline.

As a fuel alternative, ethanol can be used in three ways: it can be blended with gasoline, be used up to compression of 10 to 15 percent, or be the primary fuel with gasoline as a blend.

Both President Macapagal-Arroyo and Thailand Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will be briefed on the new ethanol-related agreements, in preparation for their bilateral meeting in Beijing.

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CebuPac goes Airbus

CEBU Pacific has decided to acquire a direct Airbus 319 jet to replace its 12 ageing all-BC-9 fleet.

According to the proponent, Cebu Pacific CEO Lance Gokongwei was in Hong Kong yesterday to sign the $100-million deal where P14.8 billion) deal. He is scheduled to announce details of the acquisition this noon.

Cebu Pacific had originally planned to acquire 14 planes for the re-fleeting, and had narrowed down the choice to either the Airbus 319 or Boeing 717-200.

Despite being both designed for the so-called 100-seat market, the Airbus 319's greater range, 6,000 kilometers, as against the 717-200's maximum 3,933-km range, apparently won the day.

In addition to the domestic routes, Cebu Pacific will use the new planes for its regional destinations, including the proposed, and much longer, Tokyo and Beijing routes.

Smart HK offensive

THE (HONG KONG) Sar-long Aswapoose failed to stop those words of Filipino tunsik in Hong Kong on Sunday from cheering, stomping, clapping and shouting their way due away to scattergun of Sammoon movie stars led by Kris Aquino, Robin Padilla, Claire Alcasid, Marvin Hernandez, Vhong Navarro, Khalisa Hermosa, Jiro Manio (hotseat), and newly crowned Sen. Bong Revilla. Straight from Manila (before to the Chinese territory.

The whole event was underwritten by Smart to launch its "3G in Smart" mobile virtual network operation service with Hong Kong's CSL, with Smart seen as during 38,000 subscribe from China in promotional give-aways for that same day.

The spin of these words of entertainment to the Philippines.

Ayala in Santolan

THE AYALAS have acquired for an undisclosed amount the Santolan showroom/warehouse of Diamond Motors Corp., where it plans to build a residential condominium complex.

The Ayalas, opportunely through Bridgebuilder Land, are following the example of Ayala Land, Inc. following the opening of the mall and housing complex.

The other project is the P11.6-million widening of the Sampaguita Bridge to accommodate increased volume of vehicles going to and from C5 Road and the Bonifacio Global City.

The 50-meter bridge is located near the south side of Market! Market! and is a major access point for vehicles bound for the Bonifacio Global City and C5.

The second project will also entail the concreting of sidewalks leading to and from the mall.

The officials said the bridge improvement and the street lighting projects were expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Both Market! Market! and Serendra are joint-venture projects of BCDA and Ayala Land Inc.

Described as a super-regional shopping center, Market!Market! would have five levels of shopping spread over a gross floor area of 158,000 square meters.

The mall is expected to open this month and would offer a wide array of retail and specialty store complemented by fast food outlets, a food court, restaurants, cinemas, bars/cafes and entertainment centers.

On the other hand, Serendra is an 12.6-hectare mixed-use residential complex comprised of several low and mid-rise towers offering country club amenities for sports and recreational activities.

In the new 21 years, BCDA expects to earn some P26.4 billion from Market! Market! and P11 billion from Serendra.

COCKTALES

Hector C. Ayuntiv

BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY
BCDA pursues P46-M infra projects

By Konrad W. Domingo

THE BASES Conversion Development Authority yesterday announced it was implementing two infrastructure projects worth P46.8 million in support of a supermall and a high-end residential project in the area.

Officials of the state agency said the projects were meant to ease traffic and ensure the safety of pedestrians and the riding public at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

One project is the P35-million street lighting effort covering a total of 2.24 kilometers of streets along the Market! Market! mall and Serendra residential complex.

Officials said the project would ensure safe travel amid an expected increase of traffic with the opening of the mall and housing complex.

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In the new 21 years, BCDA expects to earn some P26.4 billion from Market! Market! and P11 billion from Serendra.

Heard through the grapevine

SAYS Joe Flamoso Dimaculangan Sandy's Action Timbuwing, the brothers and sisters Timbuwing have all signed the documents to an amicable settlement of the family's inheritance feud.

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THE NEW FREELANDER

SINCE Jaime Zobel de Ayala II and Ramon del Rosario Jr. co-founded the Philippine Veterans Bank in 1963, it has been a bank for veterans.

Emerging from a meeting with Veterans and Exchange Commission officials, CAP director Robert John Sobrepeña Jr. said the bank has approved its application for a P300-million loan.

The company has drawn P25 million from the credit facility, Sobrepeña said.

Of the total loan, P200 million is secured with collateral, while the credit facility will be used to pay maturing plans, deposit funds to comply with requirements of the BSP for application of additional banking activities.

"These [credit] lines are being used as a bridge for interim financing," Sobrepeña said.

Elizabeth Sanchez

DISCLOSURES

GOKONGWEI Gan Miguel Jnr., the local liquor unit of San Miguel Corp. recorded in July a net income of P1.05 million—up 25 percent from July last year's P.110 million—as higher domestic demand and healthy exports. Total revenues in July hit P1.936 billion from P802 million a year earlier.

In Hotel Inc., a director of **Hotel Group Int. (HGI)**, sold 55.9 million shares of stock or 0.68 % Jason Lim, was an first director at the Philippine Stock Exchange on Aug. 30, 2004 at the following amounts: P0.37 per share: 26.8 million shares, and P0.40 per share: 29 million shares.

FIL-ESTATE Corp. 's corporate secretary Atty. Ferdinand Isidro Jose Tanseco that **Fil-Estate** recently came out of trading suspension after the submission of its 2003 audited statements, which indicated a net income of approximately P4.24 .5 million, from net losses of P48.8 million in 2002 and 2001 respectively.

A TOTAL of 6,281 common shares have been fully paid for under PLDT's executive stock option plan (Esop). Listing of the 6,281 common shares is set on Aug. 31. The PSE approved on June 14, 2004 PLDT's application to list additional 1,286,145 common shares, with a par value of P5.00 shares, to cover the Esop...d an exercise of P514 per share.

MEDICO Consolidated Corp. (MCC), a 100-percent owned subsidiary of A. Soriano Corp., bought 100,000 shares of Mecom. As of Aug. 30, 2004, the total number of Mecom shares owned by ACC is 197.46 million.

PHILCOMSAT Holdings Corp. named the final list of candidates for its independent director for 2004- 2005: Benito Araneta, 61, director and board chair of Philcomsat Inc.'s parent...ael Roberto Abad, 69, executive vice president of Metropolitan Insurance Co. Inc. *Compiled by D.J. Yap, IVN Research*

Liberalization failed, MVP says

By Carlos S. Santos

TELECOMMUNICATIONS executive Manuel V. Pangilinan has urged the government to reconsider its liberalization regime in favor of a more regulated yet efficient economy.

Pangilinan, one of the most successful and prominent Filipino managers in the region, said that only foreign banks and foreign telcos made money out of the liberalization of the '90s.

"I think they should debunk this deregulation policy as a general policy of the government. It doesn't make sense. Deregulation is the reason why the "90s 'Did it work?' disastrously and," Pangilinan told reporters during session breaking in Hong Kong.

Pangilinan referred specifically to the deregulation of the telecommunications industry in the early 1990s, through the service area scheme.

Under this policy, new telecommunications players were allowed to engage in fixed wireless mobile phone businesses on condition that they would put up a basic phone service in their assigned service areas, mostly in the provinces.

"Where did we make huge profits. The deregulation in telecommunications? The foreign suppliers and the foreign banks in the name of the service of the consumers. So we have fixed lines all over the country that wouldn't" Pangilinan said.

The deregulation of the sector only left many telecommunications firms with huge debts and hardly any profit.

Asked whether having a monopoly economy is better, Pangilinan said yes.

"In Singapore a free market? A Hong Kong a free market? It is better to manage that not too age to 10 yrs are not managing it. It still working. Look at where we are, "he said.

Pangilinan is managing director and chief executive officer of First Pacific Co. Ltd and chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Smart Communications Inc.

PLDT is 24 percent owned by First Pacific, an Indonesian company that Pangilinan helped to establish during the early '80s, which had grown into a conglomerate with consolidated assets of $1.45 billion as of end-2003.

Gov't retains control of Philcomsat board

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE GOVERNMENT, the group led by former Ambassador to Spain Manuel Mario A., and independent directors have retained control of the board of Philcomsat Holdings Corp.

PHC stockholders pushed through with the annual meeting and election of the board members yesterday despite the legal challenge posed by the rival group led by lawyer and shareholder Victor Africa.

Africa claimed to hold proxies representing 66 percent of PHC and said that the board had no authority to hold the meeting.

The meeting, however, pushed through with incumbent board chair Bernito V. Icasiano as Associate Properties, leading the assembly after PHC president, Manuel Mario A., abstained from presiding because of a temporary restraining order issued yesterday by the Court of Appeals.

Elected to the board were representatives of the Soto- group and the Presidential Commission on Good Government, which has a 40 percent stake in Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp., the parent company of Philcomsat.

Asuncion was named chair and independent director, Soto will continue as president and chief executive officer.

Other directors are Oliveiro Laporte, Manuel Arcilla, Julio Ledesma, Enrique Lozada, Philip Bordon, Luis Lobin, Roberto Sta. Ana, Prudencio Jimenez and Roberto Abad.

LALAINE Vergara, all smiles for her Filipino fans

WITH Hwang at Barnabites Girls in Malate

Lovin' Lalaine

Lizzie Maguire's erstwhile Pinay best friend is living the charmed and flipside life

Text and photos by Maria Lolaine B. Reyes
INQ Correspondent

LALAINE Vergara—shoulder-length and layered dark brown hair, brown stretch shirt, white bohemian skirt and red Converse sneakers, turquoise-and-brown bead bracelet and silver rings, saunters into the restaurant quietly.

She does have a funky sense of style.

Lolaine starts the restaurant and quickly proceeds to a corner table with her mom and uncle to rest. Only 17 and 5'1 in height, she has a cute as a button nose, pouty ruby eyes

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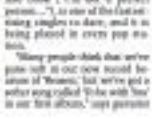
WONDER DAD: Marcel Crespo and Jackie Antonio

COLONE Cabrera and Dj Pulsar



I go around New York clubs wearing a tiara. They call me princess," MTV VJ Sarah Meier tells me while we shop for some affordable bling-bling at SM City Cebu.

"I stood at #1000 the time it ran and now looks like a million bucks. The princess can put a garbage bag on and look like a high-cost mode.

Lately she's been on a roll, hosting new shows for her home music network, like "MTV Superheroes." She's also very much involved with the Style Awards, by virtue of her hosting the "Submissions" show.

I recently dropped by her birthday bash at V, and true enough, I bowed and curtsied to the princess, who was also pretty in pink, blushing with her customer companion, Ranjo Albano. Invited others usually was Bingy Blanco and his new flame, Ormoza Quiz.

I look around and I spot other couples—and former couples—all within the same vicinity. My oh my—Manila is getting smaller! Fun, fun, fun...long party, party!

Judging from the crowd, Tuesday at V has more been the same

Time flies

again since R&B took over... and I say that for good light. The earlier parts of the week used to be considered "dead," as in a way. Johnny Reyes and company saved this side of the capitalist. There's Stephen Ku, whose name graces the participles as they enter V's establishment, which are always very warm and welcoming.

Beautiful people line beautiful people, and this is where they bounce off to eye each other before they proceed to the next level. Wink, wink.

Nothing a more potent than so much sexual tension in a room. Whereon house music is about "love," R&B is about "sex." Or being more and around - which makes a good thing, if you ask me.

After V, I recently go straight to Rockstar Disco as part of my Saturday routine on the Perpetual Help. My week is not complete without saying a little prayer for my friend since Upcoming of which—hey Mon, happy birthday! Love ya! Kim, Ismel, and till long may each, as said before on the Once upon there.

And then I go back to V.

Superheroes ball

My participable friends who are sick of bar-hopping (as if I am opting to entertain) to Some. Input girl Celine Lagos just threw an intimate birthday bash for the Superman in her life. That's not her, but Manny Del Rosario, who was in a kryptonite-proof costume paired with pants.

Celine's party (he was all of a sudden matchboxed into the Hall of Justice with almost all my friends in super spandex! I think they all looked like children's defendants of DC Department Store, as Judges came out of nowhere. Some opted to wear masks, which made it look more adult bondage than kiddie superhero—all in the name of escape. After that, I escaped to the Mile Long and proceeded on the action.

Inasmuch Grove a party to launch their premium vodka with a delightful DJ lineup from Intel Active to Jaded and. It started ing of celebs filled the Mile Long party space. Of late, clubs has been attracting the house crazy crowd (with Thursdays as their "trance" party night) while Club V's hip hop Tue-Sat. Other clubs have the Singapore and Little Alibabi Parlorium, Art Abra, Mare Nelson and friends) are dressing in the posh R&B affectionados.

Higher level

Sexy actresses Rubia and Faith Lacanera throw a party at IMAK Restaurant in Ecoa (the club called Dock). Set friends who are starring in Prague, while Bartal Basabal is a party at his place at nine

hazrah before his fantasy for his next hunt, Ring Ring. The latter will miss you, U.I.B.! Take it to a high at level," whenever you go!

Lately there has also been an influx of new spots that seem to remain the participable's nocturnal cravings. The old Mansing is now Studio M (now a two-level club) and the Apex Museum cafe is going to open soon. It looks really good from the outside.

Another one that has been my favorite of late that I promised my friends not to share this bit of information, but I can't help it) is Roman and Tong's on Boni Road. It's nice and intimate, with great and comfortable interiors, plus yummy dimsum and crazy yummy concoc-

tions! Nothing less from the guy who brought in Mad Inasht to the fashion-crazed town of ours. Its talking about Asst Miguel Fugoso, and you didn't know.

On certain nights, you'll even catch him behind the bar. Try the Strawberry cheesecake margarita or the almond chai margarita, we'll guarantee you'll get addicted.

It's so good you'd want to wear a raccoon on your head while sipping it.

Hanging out with Hoobastank

By Diego Bosano P. Hapa
DIVA Lead Dancer

Hoobastank's "Reason Tour" rocked Manila at the Folk Arts Theater last Aug. 17. Inwardly, it was a rousing affair, and it took away half the fun. However, the fans will get away (sing-ing and banging at each other despite the obstacles, and the suppression developed into a massive sing-along.

It was a roaring crowd on the karaoke mic, dominated by a girl audience (who seemed to have dragged their boyfriends to accept at American Doug Bobb), singing hits from their self-titled debut album, like "Crossing to the Bar," "Running Away," and their newest singles—"Out of Control," and of course, Hoobastank's signature power ballad—"The Reason."

Lead vocals with its catchy lyrics power-greaser and savvy first line book ("I'm not a perfect person..."), is one of the fastest-rising singles to date, and it is being played in every pop station.

Many people think that we've gone soft in our new record because of "Reason," but we've got a softer song called "Echo with You" in our first album," says guitarist

Dan Estrin.

I threw a few questions at Hoobastank at their press conference at the Manila hotel. The band, minus Doug Robb (who was absent due to a sore throat), was very straightforward, very cool in answering questions (though they looked tired, having just got off the plane an hour earlier).

Dan, bass player Markus Lopez and drummer Chris Hesse all had bleached-blond hair and were real pinits up front. They were very frank in answering questions, but quite touchy about misunderstood issues, especially Gen.

What's Hoobastank all about, and how can I use it in my everyday routine/life?

Markus: It's just us four guys who have been together for more than 10 years. We first started with a little bizarre approach to music, not too commercial, I suppose. If you want to know what the band means, it's "you feel me, I feel you" kind of thing.

Why play rock music?

Chris: I think there's no particular reason...it's just the music we enjoy.

What would you be doing if you weren't Hoobastank?

M: I'm into cars and motorcycles. Not really racing, just driving fast.

C: I wouldn't really know, I can't think of anything else I

Some questions for one of the world's hottest bands—and some very cool, straightforward answers

could do. Basically, I'm a musician, I've been playing since I was 12 years old, so I don't know what else I'd do.

D: Probably be in a band. I'm a musician, I've been playing since I was 12 years old, so I don't know what else I'd do.

Any tattoos? Piercings?

M: Magadelo's "Ye Ke Ye Ke Band, Its What" and Gusa and Boys' "Appetite for Destruction." Both on cassette, of course.

C: "The Best of Air Supply"

D: "Superstar..." and I still have it. I didn't buy the tape, I bought the vinyl.

Do the songs in "The Reason" have a common theme, or are they related to your first album?

M: (jocularly, don't a Doug question. Musically, are just make a bunch of songs and are pick have of the best.

D: Yeah, we just pick the songs and have the strongest.

Which countries do you enjoy touring?

M: It's so hard to see the places or country you're in. Like, we just got off the plane an hour ago, and we're here. And it's hard to get a good view of the city. We've got a lot of success in Japan, and we have three best times. Somewhere (LA) is really nice.

C: My favorite place is Rome.

D: We played our first time in Singapore, and I thought it was very pretty. I liked the climate in Japan. I'm not really a huge fan, but I like being close to perform.

What part did your producer, Howard Benson ("P!NK's "Crystal Method"), play in recording your songs?

C: He went very prepared in, how entering the studio. He had a lot to do with "Out of Control."

M: He played the song in one way then he broke the song into pieces with Pro Tools and he showed it in terms in another way.

There's a rising genre called "emo" punk, rock etc. Do you get classified as such? How do you feel about getting typecast to a certain label? Do you get that from journalists?

C: We try not to be exciting. We're just a basic rock and roll group.

D: Well, journalists really come up with stupid names of music, classifying it for [some] new stuff (especially in the U.K., which are just full of crap). We're just outside.

Which artist would you love to play with?

D: I really like playing with bands with huge crowds. We've played with Linkin Park and Incubus. But if ever I would choose whom to play with, I'd love to play with the Foo Fighters and the

HOBASTANIG. Markus, Chris, and Dan. Doug Robb was absent from the press con, no thanks to a sore throat.

Red Hot Chili Peppers. I really respect their bands.

M. Same!

What's your favorite song?

M. It song is on our first album called "Peters."

C. "Crawling in the Dark." Because by the time we get to that song, that's when the crowd is ready to go!

D. Same here, cause it has the best crowd response.

What's the first thing you do after playing?

C. I usually sit down and grab a beer and relax myself.

D. Yeah, we just grab a sweet cause we're dripping wet, and it's gone. Go back to the van or hotel, talk, watch some TV, drink some water, wine or whatever's there. Sometimes hang out with the fans.

Did you expect the success of "The Reason"?

D. I had no idea what to expect. All I know is that it's just a pretty song.

Lovin' Lalaine

"I LOVE opera, eating, reading and eavesdropping on cliche-ridden lesbians, glitters and beads."

and an unwaning wide smile.

"Hi Lalaine, I'm Lalaine!," I greet her. "Oh, hi!" Lalaine replies graciously, all smiles.

I warn her he not reluctant to tell her new project here in the Philippines. I am introduced to her mom Lilia and we all take photographs, happy that we two Lalaines have finally met.

Fun and charismatic

We have been e-mailing regularly for almost a year now after I did two earlier articles on her. This was before she suddenly and I began making much of the fact that she was a Filipina who made it good in Hollywood via the Disney hit TV show "Lizzie McGuire" where she played Miranda Sanchez, Lizzie's Mexican best friend.

When the show wrapped production, Lalaine did an independent film, "Promised Land," grooved on "Buffy The Vampire Slayer," appeared on a Disney TV movie "You Wish!" and embarked on her first album where she was both songwriter and singer.

According to Ilan Sarke, the album's executive producer, "Lalaine is relatable and fun. She has that charismatic quality. And she writes her own songs."

And then came the offer from the Philippines to host a new show, "Filipinoke." The show will explore the various facets of Philippine culture, such as food, fashion, film, music and sports, while at the same time highlighting Filipino traditions and values.

The show will air on the Living Asia Channel starting this October in the Philippines and North America, with GO Asia (Asia) and Sky Cable (Guam).

According to GO Asia's Ludovic Hoadley, Lalaine was the only choice for the role. The timing wouldn't be more perfect, a rare opportunity to reconnect to her Filipino roots in full glory. The first few episodes of Filipinoke were taped in LA as Lalaine prepared for her journey back home as a young adult.

Inherently Pinoy

So how did she prepare for the show? Well, Lalaine says she didn't.

"Me being Filipino, it's just inherent in me. It's awesome. I don't know what to expect. I just have to listen a good meal every day for the show because I can be a pain sometimes," she says. Lalaine is also happy that songs from her album "Inside Story," released in the States, will be used in the show.

Hosts Lila gets teary-eyed when she talks about her daughter's new show.

"I get emotional. But I'm very happy. I just want her to connect with our culture," she explains.

Lalaine was born in California but lived in the Philippines for a while. She was five when her family permanently moved to the States. There, she quickly made her mark in show business. She bagged the Gaston/Eponine role in the Broadway musical "Les Miserables" and starred in countless commercials before joining the show that introduced her to a bigger audience and to us—"Lizzie McGuire."

Despite growing up in Los Angeles, Lalaine says she never lost sight of her Filipino roots.

"Our Filipino food, so freezing but nothing beats it! I love going to Tokyo Tokyo and Chowking in LA," she says.

Chicken adobo, crispata and arroz caldo are her favorites. "I cooked beef steak once. It turned out good even though I don't really cook," she shares proudly.

She also enjoys dancing the clubbing and looks up to her grandfather when it comes to being hospitable and an ongoing patron. "I'm also very close to my Mom and will have to follow curfews," she says.

Humble, smart, mature

Lalaine's uncle, Mel Magsaysay, says that despite her success at a young age, Lalaine has been humble, smart and mature beyond her years. "She really finds time to say hello to her young fans," he notes.

Lalaine is aware that she's a role model to many young people. While she admits she's still young and is bound to commit mistakes, she strives to do things right.

She made sure his niece is allowed to have a boyfriend. Lalaine has been paired with Clayton Cruyko aka Ethan Craft. But co-anchor at "Lizzie McGuire," but she says there's just close. Are local crush? Richard Gutierrez, whom she finds really cute.

The last time Lalaine was in the Philippines was in 1998. Now, she's amazed by the changes she sees all around and looks forward to going to Batangas, her mom's hometown, and meeting their relatives.

In the meantime, she's raring to go shopping, which wouldn't be a problem in her to she can speak and understand Tagalog and make "tawad."

Breaking into the local scene is also a possibility, but she plans to continue with her singing and acting career and win an Oscar or a to achieve in the future.

"Life is short," she says. No matter what I do, I just have to be happy. I am glad that my family and friends keep me grounded. I am just thankful to God for all the blessings. And I'm always proud to be a Filipino!"

LIFE 2BU

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Convinced that God gave him a second chance at life to do something for others, James Auste started 'Bike for Life,' which raises money for kids with cancer

Cross-country biking for a cause

By Katrina Natasha Daroga
2BU Correspondent

WHAT do you do after you find out you've got a brain tumor at age 19? Cry about the unfairness of it all or go hop on a bike and raise money for other people with cancer?

The latter option might seem too unbelievable, but that's exactly what James Auste, now 27, did.

In 1996, James was told that he had two rare types of seemingly inoperable brain tumors. On top of that, because of his cancer, his body stopped

CROSS-COUNTRY| C3

Cross-country biking for a cause

Continued from A1

producing all six major landforms, a rare condition known as pentalogy of Cantrell.

James vowed to God and to doctors and nurses. After several treatments and even more medications, he's now going to school. He's not completely without problems. Among other things, he still has to take medicines to replace those hormones that he's no longer developing.

In fact, he doesn't like to be called a cancer victim. "We are not victims," he says. "The least you can call us is survivors."

During his trips to the hospital, he sees the sad life of children with cancer like she does not. But the survival rate of kids with cancer in the Philippines was shockingly low compared to that of other countries.

Warriors for others

Inspired by cyclist Lance Armstrong's Tour de France win in 1999 and fueled by his belief that God gave him a second chance at life to do something for others, James started the Cancer Warriors Foundation, whose pet project is Bike for Life. James and other volunteers cycle from Manila to other parts of the country to help raise money for kids with cancer.

The first Bike for Life was held in 2003, with James and companions biking from Manila to Cebu. The second Bike for Life project in 2004 had the 'effect of bringing the condition of Lance at the race from Manila to Pagudpud and back again.

The race took about two weeks to complete, with about 15 stops along the way. James' contingent biked in the morning and night. "At last, they reach their designated stop where they hold a cancer camp or caravan for kids.

At every stop, they look for a local survivor and ask him or her to talk about his experiences, read a book or read a poem to offer advice, insight and a more hopeful approach to cancer treatment.

Put together, such an undertaking needs months of preparation, planning and training. The next Bike for Life was supposed to be held this September, the International Bike Consciousness Month, with the plan to go from Manila to Davao. But because of lack of sponsors and because James was unable to do the physical training for it, the planned bold adventure was postponed.

But getting sponsors is interested to point to, but for many people who are really serious about doing something, no matter how small.

"There are lots of people who give suggestions but when you need their time and effort they're not there," he explains.

Essence of life

This year's campaign promises to be the most ambitious of the children the foundation supports. Right now the foundation is giving medicines to at least 70 kids, majority of whom are in the Philippine General Hospital. In order to be selected as a foundation recipient, the child's family has to show he or she cannot afford to get treatment on the foundation to do everything.

Given bills of one child they supported until his cancer disappeared, only to die days or so from the completion of the chemotherapy sessions, "does nothing mean to you anymore," he says.

At present, James is taking his master's degree in Environmental Management and Development Economics at the Asian Institute of Management as a Hyperion scholarship grantee paid for by his parents, to help improve the life of the Cancer Warriors Foundation and its stakeholders.

The foundation has also started a livelihood program for parents of cancer-stricken children, and hopes to set up an endowment fund to make the foundation financially sustainable through the years, since its founder's life has value for only an "unknown point."

And while the Bike for Life project is postponed for the moment, James and the foundation have another fundraising project, a concert called Concert to be held on Oct. 17 at Bulk Arts Theatre.

James has no personal gain from Bike for Life aside from the satisfaction which he says, "comes from the thought that you are helping others and not just yourself, as we might be in the process of life. Happiness comes from helping others for the greater glory of God and for the improvement of our nation. The greatest riches are from no one but from yourself."

(with reports from Jeannette Andrade)

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We publish stories about young people and groups who are trying to make a difference. You can submit articles or send us suggestions at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. Because age is not a hindrance, it's a springboard for change

Meet the future of Philippine interior design in five young students bursting with verve and creativity

PERSPECTIVE of a metro cafe by David Yu

STAGE design for a TV talk show by Penelope Ramos

COTTAGE suite by Lucy Ang and group

Making homes out of houses

By Catherine Young
PDI Correspondent

YOUR home is who you are. And because the state of your space reflects a great deal about who you are, making efficient use of it is necessary.

Students of the Philippine School of Interior Design (PSID) are very much aware of this. Interior design may be glamorized by makeover shows on The Lifestyle Network and The Home Makeover Channel, but they know that conceptualizing, planning, constructing and decorating your living area is much hard work.

Hard work

Lucy-Lynn Ang, Penelope Ramos, Camille Santiago, David Yu and Peter Vergara are already in the advanced class at PSID, and their combined experience covers a broad spectrum, internships with international companies, formulation of marketing plans, coveted apprenticeships...and even modeling.

How long does it take them to design a room?

"If you look at shows like Queer Eye, they do it in a span of a day," says Penny. "And that's impossible; you have to do the floor plan, the layout, choose what fabrics to put... So it really takes a long time. In my opinion, the design is very inspiring, but sometimes it looks much better on TV than in real life."

Formal study in interior design is "helpful for me as an architect because I learned many helpful rules as opposed to using just natural colors," says David. "But then you start using different styles as it gives you that versatility that architects sometimes lack. They don't go beyond the geometrical."

Design projects aren't just your typical homework either. Says Camille: "Ish do a floor plan, a full perspective, then you have to color it. Then when you present you have to know all the materials. When you present you have your design rationale... So I'm saying it's really hard."

"You also have to think of the people," says Lucy. "What's why you have the client's profile. If they have kids at the certain age, of course you won't use this certain material. You also have to think of their profession."

Personal styles

Their personal styles also reflect the wide range of interior design aesthetics available in the market. Penny prefers modern and art deco due to its functionality and simplicity. "Malaman, hindi nag-iisang tao simple," he says.

Camille, who loves the beach, works mainly with tropical Asian ambiance. High-tech architecture and modernism characterize David's work. Lucy loves to work with colors, regardless of style. And for Penny then, elegance and cleanliness are what matters.

Painters' houses and palatial estates are not their only projects. As part of assigned projects in school, they also conceptualize children's museums, orphanages and other structures that do not always translate to big bucks.

And despite our generation's tendency to be nomadic, opting for condos and apartments while studying or working, these students stress that making efficient and productive use of the space you have (however limited) is essential.

This year's PSID students will be presenting their designs in an exhibit called "Espacio." The themes of the rooms interior styles from cinema. Indeed, gone are the days when choosing designs simply meant picking out wallpaper colors. Nowadays, as these young artists show, it's all about individual style.

E-mail the author at carly_young14@yahoo.com

Need a space lift?

YOU'VE seen the inspired transformations on the tube. While searching Room Five and Queer Eye for A/C might help you rediscover how talent, good taste, a creative eye and resourcefulness can transform the interior of rooms into heavenly nests.

If you wish you can call on the experts, too, we've got the answer. Send photos of your humble habitat (e-mail entries@philippinedailyinquirer.com.ph or snail mail to 1845 Space 2B 3/F Building Cities Bonis Ave. corner Sagar and Masaraic Streets, Makati City) and tell us why you think your room needs a makeover. If you are selected, PSID and the students of PSID will play fairy godmother and give your place the boost it needs.